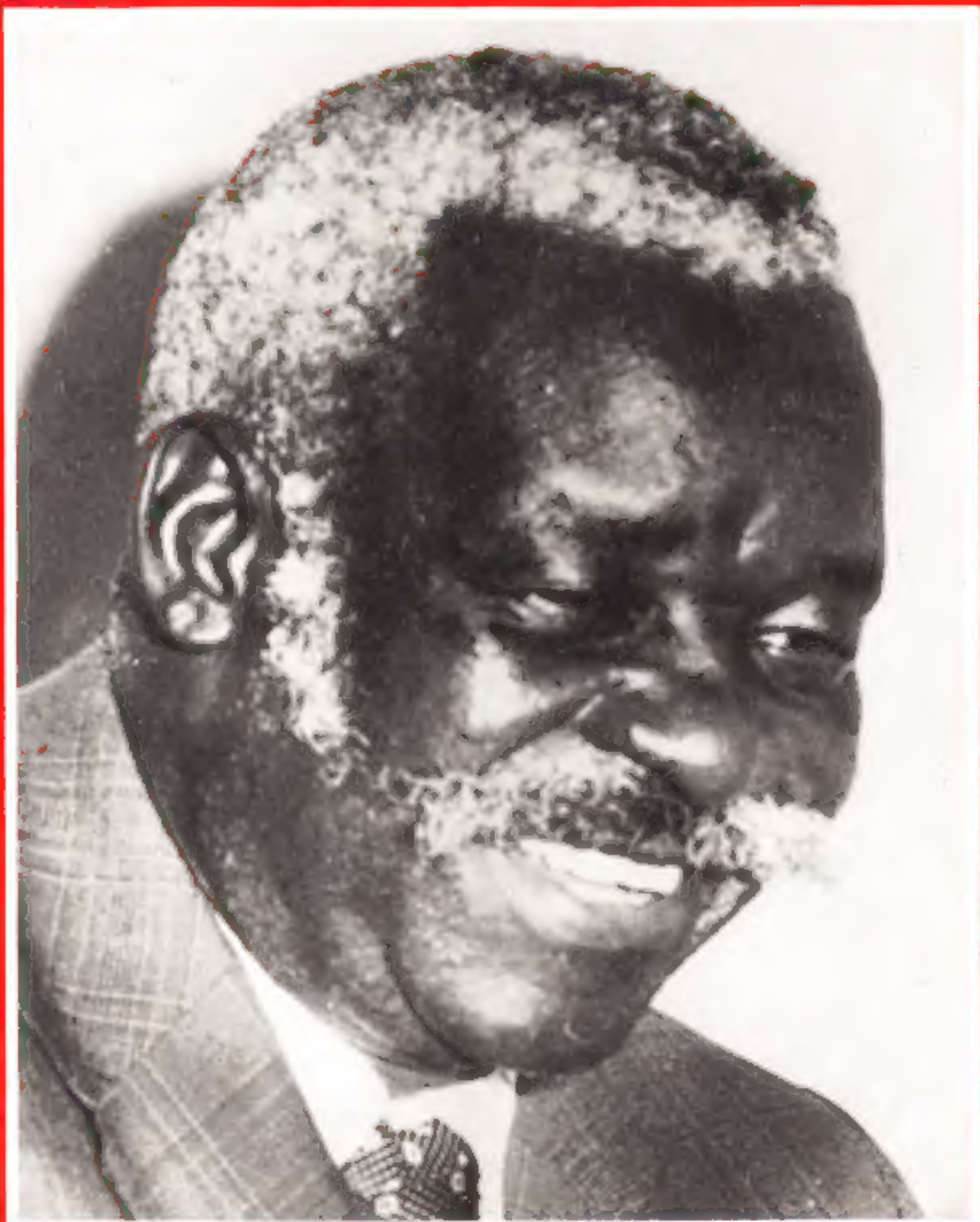


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MOSES MABHIDA



**GENERAL SECRETARY
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60th Anniversary of the S.A. Communist Party

On July 30 this year the South African Communist Party celebrates its 60th anniversary. The oldest Party on the African continent, it has a proud history of struggle to its credit — struggle against the inhumanity and injustice of race and class oppression flowing from the pursuit of private profit, struggle for the achievement of a saner and juster non-racial and non-exploitative society in which all South Africans will enjoy equal rights and opportunities based on the common ownership of the means of production and distribution.

Strictly speaking it was not the SACP which was born in 1921, but its predecessor the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), which was dissolved in 1950 just before the enactment of the Suppression of Communism Act by the Nationalist Government, the SACP being

reconstituted in the early 1950s and holding its first congress underground in 1953. But the SACP from the outset regarded itself as the inheritor of the tradition and policies of the CPSA and was brought into existence by the majority of Marxist-Leninists who belonged to the former CPSA, so that for all practical purposes Communist Party activity has been continuous throughout the past 60 years.

In fact, the history of the Party dates back even before 1921. What happened on July 30 of that year was that a number of likeminded organisations from all over South Africa based on the philosophy of Marxism decided to merge so that the single body which resulted would qualify for affiliation to the Third International, whose Charter permitted the recognition of only one Communist party for each country. The most important of these founding bodies was the International Socialist League which was formed in Johannesburg in September 1915, and it was this date which was often referred to by early leaders of the Party as its birthday. Thus, for example, the September 7, 1935, issue of *Umsebenzi*, the Party journal which started life under the name of *The International*, contained an article headed: "Twenty Years of the Revolutionary Press in South Africa", tracing the paper back to its origin on September 10, 1915, when it was described in its first issue as the organ of the International League of the South African Labour Party. And in fact the separate existence of what we may regard as a Communist nucleus came about even earlier, in September 1914, just after the outbreak of the First World War, when the true socialists within the Labour Party formed the War on War League inside the Party to give expression to their opposition to capitalism and war and their determination to uphold the international solidarity of labour in the fight for socialism.

"Socialism" and "internationalism" — these have been the watchwords of the South African Communist Party from that day to the present. These are the two pillars on which the Party has based its internal and external policies.

Socialist organisations and socialist thinking of one sort or another had existed in various forms in South Africa since the turn of the century. The South African Labour Party came into existence in 1910 with a socialist objective in its constitution. For historical reasons it grew out of the white labour movement and its membership was almost exclusively white. The backing it received from the electorate may be gauged from the fact that by 1915 it had 8 members of Parliament and 23 members of the Transvaal Provincial Council — a reflection of the tense battles waged by the workers and their trade unions during the years since Union, and especially in 1913 and 1914. Socialist-minded men had risen into the positions of top leadership

in the Labour Party, with W.H. Andrews as chairman and D. Ivon Jones as secretary. The 1913 conference of the Labour Party decided to admit Coloureds to membership and also to affiliate to the Second International, the aim of which was to secure the implementation of the *Communist Manifesto* slogan: "Workers of all countries, unite!"

It was the outbreak of the First World War which sorted out the true socialists within the Labour Party and tempered the steel from which the Communist Party was eventually forged. For as Lenin pointed out, war is the inevitable product of imperialism, and no true socialist could allow himself to support an imperialist war. At the Stuttgart conference of the Second International in 1907, a resolution opposing "wars between capitalist states", in the drafting of which Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg had a hand, stated in part:

"If a war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working class and of its parliamentary representatives in the countries involved to exert every effort to prevent the outbreak of war, using all appropriate means, which naturally vary and rise according to the degree of sharpness of the class struggle and of the general political agitation"

"Should the war none the less break out, it is their duty to intervene to bring it promptly to an end, and to strive with all their energies to utilise the economic and political crisis brought about by the war in order to stir up politically the masses of the people and hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule".

These two sentences were incorporated in the manifesto issued by the Basle congress of the Second International in 1912 which emphasised the responsibility of the international working class to prevent the threatening outbreak of war in Europe. A version of this resolution was endorsed by the 1913 Labour Party conference in South Africa, and influenced the Administrative Council of the Party to pass a resolution on August 2, 1914 (two days before the British Government declared war on Germany) expressing "its protest against the capitalist governments of Europe in fomenting a war" and appealing to the workers of the world to "organise and refrain from participating in this unjust war".

Although the anti-war section was in the leadership of the Labour Party and dominated the Administrative Council and the Party machine, the membership was not united on the issue. The right-wing wanted to support the Botha Government's war effort and the right-wing Labour leader Frederic Creswell immediately joined the forces and went on active service. More important, the Labour Party journal *The Worker* was edited by Wilfred

Wybergh, a close friend of Creswell, who used the party organ to conduct a blatant pro-war policy in defiance of party policy and the decisions of the party conference and the Administrative Council.

Fearing to provoke a split in the Party, the anti-war section headed by Colin Wade, D. Ivon Jones, S.P. Bunting and P.R. Roux refrained from using its positions of power to promote its policies, and instead formed the War on War League in September 1914. The League published a weekly journal *The War on War Gazette* to counter the chauvinist policies of *The Worker*, but after 13 issues the Gazette was closed down by the censor at the end of November.

When the annual conference of the Labour Party met in East London in January 1915, it was found that the majority of the delegates were sticking loyally to the Stuttgart-Basle declarations and supported the anti-war positions of the Administrative Council. But unwilling to impose an anti-war resolution which would have split the party, the leadership produced a compromise which allowed each party member "freedom of conscience" to support or oppose the war. This "neutrality resolution", as it came to be called, was passed unanimously.

The Administrative Council remained in the hands of the anti-war section. Nevertheless, the controversy continued. When Creswell, now risen to the rank of Colonel, returned from the campaign in South West Africa in June, 1915, he issued as parliamentary leader of the Labour Party what came to be known as the "See It Through" manifesto calling for intensified support for the war effort. War fever, whipped up both by the capitalist press and by the Labour Party's own organ *The Worker*, infected more and more of the Labour Party rank and file. A general election for the Union Parliament was due in October and a special conference of the Labour Party was called for August 22 to decide the Party's election platform. The anti-war section came under ever fiercer attack.

At the special conference in Johannesburg on August 22, Creswell put forward a resolution pledging wholehearted support for the war effort, while Colin Wade moved an amendment setting out the "War on War" policy, opposing the dispatch of South African troops, calling for an end to the imperial commitment and pledging co-operation with the international socialist movement for peace and disarmament. Creswell's motion was carried by 82 votes to 30, whereupon the anti-war section walked out of the conference. They were not giving up the fight, however. Almost immediately they decided to form the International League of the South African Labour Party, hoping to be able to carry on their anti-war

agitation from within the Labour Party.

The Creswellites, obsessed by war hysteria and chauvinism, took steps to secure the expulsion of the anti-war section from the Labour Party. But on September 15 the ISL decided to ballot its members on the proposal to secede from the Labour Party. The two decisions came into effect almost simultaneously: the International League of the S.A. Labour Party became the independent International Socialist League.

The slogan "Workers of all countries unite" created problems in South Africa, where the working class embraced men and women of all races. Membership of the Labour Party had been predominantly white, and the black working class was largely unorganised, underprivileged and underpaid, as well as often underemployed. Nevertheless, the true socialists within the Labour Party had always pressed for the inclusion of black workers. The split in the Party which occurred on the outbreak of war reflected divisions not only over the issue of proletarian internationalism, but also over the meaning of proletarian internationalism in its South African context. Not all the International Socialists saw eye to eye on this question, but the more farsighted of the ISL leadership took a principled stand from the outset and immediately steered the party in the direction of non-racialism and equality. The ISL sought co-operation with the various black organisations like the African National Congress and the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU), the African People's Organisation (APO) and the Indian Congress. Classes on the labour movement were held for black workers, blacks were invited to speak from ISL platforms and to join its ranks. The ISL involved itself in the day-to-day struggles of the people against oppression, gave its backing to strikes of black workers, assisted in the formation of the first African trade unions.

The *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels had stressed that the immediate aim of the Communists is the formation of the proletariat into a class, the overthrow of bourgeois supremacy and the conquest of political power by the proletariat who constitute the immense majority of the population. The composition of the South African proletariat was something dictated by history, by white conquest and settlement, the importation of capital following the discovery of gold and diamonds, the immigration of white skilled labour from abroad, the press-ganging of unskilled labour from the ranks of the dispossessed blacks. Under the circumstances prevailing in South Africa at the time, it was inevitable that it was whites who would take the lead in the formation of a Communist Party. But it is a matter of record

that the whites who pioneered the movement, men like W.H. Andrews, D. Ivon Jones, S.P. Bunting and their colleagues, realised from the outset that if it was true, as they proclaimed, that "socialism, to be effective, must be international", it was equally true that "an internationalism which does not concede the fullest rights which the Native working class is capable of claiming will be a sham".

As blacks consolidated their position in the ranks of the proletariat, so the composition of the Communist Party was altered. Whereas in 1915 the International Socialist League had been composed only of whites, 15 years later the overwhelming majority of Communist Party members were Africans, and men like J.B. Marks, Albert Nzula, Moses Kotane, Edwin Mofutsanyana, John Gomas, James la Guma, Johannes Nkosi and others were to be counted among the leaders, responsible for framing policies and implementing decisions. Today our Party faithfully reflects at all levels the composition of the proletariat and of the resistance movement in our country.

Our Communist Party has always been a party of militants and activists and we never had room for passengers. Our Party members have been in the thick of every people's struggle since the First World War — in the ceaseless campaigns against the pass laws, the fight for higher wages and better working conditions, the fight against fascism and war, the mineworkers' strikes of 1920, 1922 and 1946, the Defiance Campaign of 1952, the campaign for the Congress of the People and the adoption of the Freedom Charter, the bus boycotts, the resistance to apartheid, segregation and dispossession. The mass movement against white domination which has assumed such vast proportions today, striking ever more effective blows against the racist enemy, extends far beyond our ranks, but we are an essential part of it, and the unique value of our contribution is recognised by friends and enemies alike. Our Party has been tried and tested in battle and thousands of our members have been arrested and jailed; many have died at the hands of the security police. Our Party members took part in the initiation and prosecution of armed struggle. We have proved ourselves in action as the Party of the working class.

The principle which has guided all our efforts has been the need to build up the broadest united front of patriotic and anti-racist forces in the struggle against white domination. It was in pursuit of this aim that our Party explored the relationship between the national and class struggle in South Africa, and formulated in its 1962 programme the concept of "colonialism of a special type" which provided the theoretical basis for yoking together the forces of national liberation and working class revolution. At this stage of the national

democratic revolution, the main content of which is the national liberation of the African people, one of the main tasks of the Party is to forge the broadest possible unity of all strata of the population arraigned against white domination. At its augmented Central Committee meeting in 1979 the Party declared:

“Our Party is a vital component of the revolutionary alliance for national liberation headed by the African National Congress. As such it has no interests separate from any contingent of that alliance which we have always worked to strengthen. This approach does not stand in conflict with our belief that our Party has an independent role to play as a constituent part of the alliance, but also as the political vanguard of the proletariat whose special historical role as the grave-digger of capitalism and the builder of socialism we have always safeguarded”.

In the formulation of our policies, and in their implementation, we have benefited immeasurably from the guidance and assistance of the international communist movement, and we are confident that we in turn, through our own work and experience, have contributed our share to the storehouse of international revolutionary theory and strengthened the cause of proletarian internationalism. At a time when the desperation of the imperialists and the adventurism of the Chinese hegemonists threaten the world with war and nuclear destruction, it is our unshakeable belief that it is the duty of every communist party to strengthen its ties with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and to consolidate the ranks of the international communist movement.

Looking back on our history, we can claim that, guided by the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism, we have never ceased to hold before our people the goal of overthrowing apartheid and creating a new society based on equality, freedom and independence, guaranteeing to all our people the right to live in peace and security from the cradle to the grave. We have never ceased to organise the South African working class and lead them in the struggle for liberation, for the defeat of capitalism and its replacement by socialism. Confident in the justice of our cause, we have always looked to the future with optimism. We are firmly convinced that freedom can be won in our lifetime.

During this 60th birthday year, we plan with each issue of *The African Communist* to provide our readers with further insights into aspects of our history, with contributions from and about Party members of all age and national groups and from all strata of our society, from Party veterans and from the latest recruits of young militants since the Soweto uprising.

Our Party has a past of which it can justly be proud and has a future

holding out mighty prospects for the future development of the revolutionary process. The point of studying its history is to equip ourselves and all patriots for the struggles which lie ahead. Let us draw from the past the understanding, strength and confidence which must inspire all our future efforts to mobilise the people for final victory.

BOTHA'S "NEW DEAL"

The Botha regime has come forward with so many proposals and changes in South Africa's constitutional set up that the net effect is one of almost total confusion. Not many South Africans, let alone foreigners, can say precisely what it is that the government has done, or proposes to do. But one thing is certain, and that is that the basic power structure of the country remains unchanged. The black majority is still voteless. South Africa still has the most unequal income distribution of any country in the world, with 70 per cent of disposable income in the hands of only 6 per cent of the population, white income per head 14 times that of the Africans, per capita spending on white education 15 times greater than that on Africans, and so on. The statistics of repression — of arrests for pass offences, political crimes like "sabotage" and "terrorism", daily prison population, executions — remain proportionately (and often absolutely) the highest in the world.

Moreover, all official statistics must now be regarded with reserve, because they are incomplete. Figures relating to the Transkei, Bophuthatswana and Venda are excluded because they are regarded as "independent" by the Botha regime, though by nobody else in the world, least of all the population of those territories themselves. Magically, the population of South Africa, which should now be approaching the 30 million mark, has dropped to about 24 million, the remaining millions having been "freed", though still remaining in chains. This enables the South African regime to give lying figures about incomes, rates of sickness and unemployment, deaths in detention and so on. The cosmetic improvements which have been brought about, just like the underlying reality, are for the benefit of the whites, not the blacks.

Whites, however, have also suffered a loss of democratic rights through the policies of the Botha regime. The electoral basis of the House of Assembly has been tampered with by the addition of 20 nominated members whose only function is to increase the personal power of the

Prime Minister. In addition, the Senate, which used to have an electoral basis, albeit indirect and for whites only, has now been abolished, and replaced by a nominated President's Council. Why it is called the President's Council is not clear, because the State President, whose name nobody can remember, is not a member of it and has no function except to refer unspecified matters for its consideration and receive its "advice": in other words, to act merely as a messenger boy for Botha and his Cabinet. The real boss of the President's Council is the Vice-President, Alwyn Schlebusch, who has been appointed chairman of the President's Council, and who is remembered as chairman of the commission which "investigated" NUSAS, the Christian Institute, The Institute of Race Relations and the University Christian Movement on security grounds, and whose report led to the death of the UCM and the passage through Parliament of the Affected Organisations Act of 1974 which has seriously undermined the position of anti-apartheid organisations in South Africa.

The President's Council has been trumpeted to the world as a "new deal" organisation for South Africa which, for the first time, brings together whites, Coloureds and Indians to "consult" on South Africa's future. A few years ago Botha was propounding three separate Parliaments, one for whites, one for Coloureds and one for Indians, with a multi-racial Council of Cabinets at the top, but this seems to have died a natural if unproclaimed death. In its place we now have this bastard President's Council – but to do what? It has no legislative or executive powers, and can do nothing save wait for messages from the State President. What these messages will be about nobody knows. The Constitution Amendment Act No. 31 of 1980, under which the Council was set up, specifies that it can deliberate and advise the State President on "any matter". It has been said that the Council's job is to draw up a new constitution for South Africa, but the Act says nothing about this. The Council has no authority at all. The Botha Cabinet is under no obligation to take any notice of the Council's reports or recommendations or findings save to place them before Parliament, which can read them or not as it pleases. The Johannesburg *Sunday Times* reported on October 12:

"According to informed sources, it is likely that the full council will sit for relatively short sessions of up to two weeks at a time, four or five times a year."

After all, how much time do you need to do nothing?

But if the powers of the President's Council are restricted, so is its membership. Africans are excluded altogether, because in the eyes of the government they don't qualify as South African citizens but belong to

Bantustans which will sooner or later be "independent". The exclusion of Africans from the Council has led the Progressive Federal Party to refuse to have anything to do with it, and the Coloured Labour Party and the Indian Reform Party have also refused to allow any of their members to take up seats. The result is that Botha found it almost impossible to persuade any well-known Coloureds, Indians or Chinese to accept nomination and the Council as finally constituted contains only 15 black collaborators, mostly unknown, the remaining 45 members being white reactionaries - Nationalists, crypto-Nationalists and failed opposition ex-MPs like Japie Basson.

Unelected, unrepresentative, the President's Council speaks for nobody and can achieve nothing. Its only function is to deceive the world. At the Transvaal Nationalist Party Congress last September, Premier Botha claimed he was "determined to go ahead with consultations with Coloured and Indian leaders" because "the stage had now been reached where they had no real political rights. Ways had to be found to include them in the arrangement of public affairs on a practical basis". President's Council or no President's Council, blacks still have no political rights. At that same Transvaal Congress, the verkrampste Dr Andries Treurnicht was unanimously and enthusiastically re-elected provincial chairman of the party after explaining that racially mixed parliaments are not Nationalist Party policy and that "what we are busy with is separation of the races".

Divide and Rule

From this point of view the President's Council is specifically designed to detach the Coloureds and Indians from the side of their fellow victims of apartheid, the Africans, and attach them to the whites as allies in the race war which the Nationalists believe lies ahead. Another part of the same strategy of divide and rule is the separation of the African people on ethnic lines, both in the urban areas and by means of the Bantustans. The latest development announced by Minister Koornhof is the division between Africans with "rights" in the urban areas and the remainder, the majority, who will exist as a reserve pool of labour in their so-called "homelands". True, Koornhof proclaims this to the world as the abolition of pass restrictions on urban Africans who, we are told, will be free to move about in "white" South Africa without being liable to arrest at every turn.

We have heard this story before. Time was when certain Africans were granted "exemption" from the pass laws - but had to produce on demand from a policeman or official a pass to prove they did not need to carry a

pass. These "privileged" Africans were still liable to harassment and arbitrary arrest. Moreover, their privileges could be cancelled at any time, their right to remain in an urban area withdrawn. Koornhof's plans are not yet laws, but only straws to test the wind. We can be sure, however, that if ever his proposals reach the statute book in one form or another, the white man boss will retain his reserve powers to remove any African from any place at any time, cancel his right to occupy his home and live with his family, deport him to the nightmare land of Bantustan where, out of sight and hearing of the press and the world, deprived of work and all facilities for decent living, he can rot to pieces without disturbing the conscience or reputation of the racist regime. The *Sunday Post* reported on August 17:

"Influx control is stricter than ever. To stop workers coming from rural areas, the Government is slamming the doors. The pass laws are being stringently enforced. The lot of the migrant worker is getting worse."

The only new feature in Koornhof's plan is that in future the pass law system is to be computerised. According to the *Johannesburg Star* of October 11:

"Computers in all areas now controlled by the main administration boards, linked to each other and to a central computer in Pretoria, would enable the Government to combat unemployment by providing instant information on where jobs are and where workers are who can do the jobs.

"The system would also enable the Government to tighten up severely on influx control. A wide array of personal details — including 'relevant' criminal offences — would be fed into the computers . . . there are fears that the system could be abused by the authorities and that it could give the Government unprecedented control over the lives of black people in urban areas".

Thus the whole edifice being constructed by Botha and passed off as "reform" is merely a device for intensified control of blacks in town and country, for converting human beings into robots and labour units. And that is also why Botha is taking away the powers of Parliament — now a largely irrelevant talking shop — and transferring real power to his national security council and the vast array of Cabinet committees he and his Defence Minister Magnus Malan have constructed for implementing their "total strategy". The President's Council, the so-called "reforms" — these are Trojan horses containing in their bellies the trigger-happy and brutalised soldiery and policemen who are defending the white racist laager.

The flaw in Botha's approach is that he indeed thinks he is dealing with robots and labour units instead of human beings. But all over the country our fighting people are proving him wrong. Never in the history of South

Africa have so many people been out on the streets demonstrating and fighting for their rights. We told part of the story in our last issue. New stories of the people's courage and determination are being told every day. The tide of revolt rises ever higher. A people who demonstrate this level of resistance to tyranny, this confidence in the future, can never be defeated.

REAGAN THREAT TO S.A. AND WORLD PEACE

The election of Ronald Reagan as President of the United States represents a setback, not only to the cause of world peace, but also to the South African liberation movement.

We are not, of course, under any illusions about the nature of the Carter administration's relations with South Africa. The US administration paid lip service to the UN arms embargo against South Africa, but behind the scenes did everything possible to assist the Botha regime to consolidate its power and extend its influence in Africa and the world. In 1979 — the last year for which figures are available — the United States was South Africa's main trading partner, with bilateral trade totalling R2,646 million, followed by West Germany with R2,219 million, Britain with R2,217 million, Japan with R1,750 million, and Switzerland with R1,724 million. These figures exclude S.A. exports of gold, uranium and platinum and imports of oil and arms. United States corporate investment in South Africa has nearly tripled in the last 10 years to almost 2 billion dollars, or one fifth of all foreign investment in South Africa, while United States bank loans have grown to well over 2 billion dollars, or about one quarter of all South Africa's foreign loans.

It is significant that South Africa's two main trading partners, the US and West Germany, are the two powers which have done most to provide South Africa with the technology, materials and know-how to manufacture enriched uranium and nuclear weapons.

The code of conduct drawn up by the Rev. Sullivan to guide US firms in their labour relations in South Africa was proclaimed to the world as a sign of US opposition to apartheid and US determination to use its influence to bring about reforms in South Africa. But a report presented by 57 prominent Americans to the UN Committee Against Apartheid in March last year pointed out that the Sullivan principles were drawn up to defeat demands for US disinvestment in South Africa.

The report stressed:

"The fact is that many corporations, just by being present in South Africa, give direct strategic assistance to South Africa in its fight to defend itself against those who want to abolish apartheid".

As examples it quoted the Fluor Corporation of California which in 1979 announced that it had received a 2 billion dollar contract to expand an oil-from-coal plant it had been building for the South African Government. General Motors and Ford continued to supply trucks and other vehicles to the police and military, and defended their right to do so. The chairman of Control Data commented in 1979 that "the little bit of repression that is added by the computer in South Africa is hardly significant" compared with the good the company claims to be doing. Mobil and Caltex continue to sell petrol to the South African Government, including the military, while Citibank provides loans worth hundreds of millions of dollars to strengthen the South African economy.

An article in the London *Guardian* of October 2, 1980, suggests that it is the extensive US investment in South Africa, together with considerations of South Africa's strategic importance, which made it so difficult for a panel of experts appointed by the Carter administration to confirm that South Africa had indeed exploded a nuclear device off its coast on September 22, 1979, as detected by a US satellite. A British TV film last October showed that the rockets for this explosion were supplied by the US-Canadian firm Space Research Corporation.

Nor are the economic links between the US and South Africa entirely one-sided. Guess who is the biggest foreign investor in the United States? None other than Oppenheimer's Anglo-American Corporation, which beat Royal Dutch Shell into second place with sales of nearly 20 billion dollars in 1979. And last September it was announced that SASOL is to sell its oil-from-coal know-how to the US for an undisclosed sum acknowledged to total tens of millions of rand.

So if all this has been going on under Carter's administration, in what way can Reagan be worse? The answer is that Reagan is undisguised in his admiration and support for the South African regime. He said in October 1978:

"I do say South Africa has for a long time been an ally of the United States".

And after the Transkei was granted its "independence" in 1976, Reagan accused the western world of hypocrisy in refusing to recognise it. At the very moment of his election as President, he was reported to be proposing an alliance between the United States, Brazil, the Philippines and South

Africa as the basis for "defence" of the free world against Soviet "aggression". Anybody who can contemplate such an alliance will obviously find himself in opposition to liberation movements throughout the world, and it is noteworthy that at his first press conference after his election Reagan denounced the PLO as a "terrorist" organisation.

Under the banner of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism Reagan and Thatcher can be expected to join hands in an attempt to bring South Africa back to international respectability, and to resume the supply of arms to the Botha regime. Progressive forces throughout the world must be alerted to the danger of such moves and must resist every suggestion of compromise with apartheid. The combination of the forces of racism and imperialism spells danger not only to South Africa and independent Africa but to world peace.

OBITUARY

During 1980 the liberation movement suffered a number of grievous losses. African National Congress leader Kate Molale died in Tanzania on May 9, 1980, after being involved in a car accident six days earlier. Also killed in the same accident was Peter Sithole, who died on the spot.

Kate Molale was one of the most outstanding women ever to serve in the ranks of the ANC. Born on January 22, 1928, she was one of the leading militants of the ANC Sophiatown branch in the early 1950s and played a leading role in the people's resistance to the Western Areas removal scheme.

In 1954 Kate Molale was elected secretary of the ANC's Sophiatown branch, and led her members in demonstrations and pickets against the introduction of the notorious Bantu Education. She was also responsible for organising the Masupatsela (guides) during the mass boycott of the schools which was the people's response to the slave education scheme.

In 1955 Kate Molale played an outstanding role in the preparations for the Congress of the People, travelling up and down the country gathering the people's demands which were incorporated in the Freedom Charter.

Kate Molale helped organise the women in the great anti-pass demonstration on August 9, 1956, now commemorated annually as South

African Women's Day. She was also active in the 1957 Alexandra bus boycott and the rent campaigns conducted at that time, and her fire and eloquence eventually led to her being elected to the National Executive of the Women's League.

When detention without trial was introduced in 1963, Kate Molale was one of the first to be arrested by the security police. After her release she was forced into exile, where she provided magnificent service in the solidarity sphere. Later she was based in Morogoro, where she continued to carry out all tasks assigned to her by the ANC up to the time of her death.

Julius First, one of the pioneer members of the Communist Party of South Africa, died at his home in London on October 14, 1980 at the age of 84. At a time when the young Communist Party was struggling to establish itself in the face of violent prejudice and repression on the part of the racist regime, Julius First joined with the small band of internationalists who were spreading the doctrines of Marxism-Leninism in the main centres and organising the oppressed black majority into the ranks of the Party and the trade union movement. He was elected chairman of the Party at its second congress in 1923, and served the Party in various other capacities during its legal days.

After the dissolution of the CPSA in 1950, Julius First remained unflinching in his loyalty to the cause of proletarian internationalism. He gave every possible support to the underground SACP, not only morally but also in a variety of practical ways which ultimately attracted the attention of the security police, forcing him to flee the country. For helping to promote the interests of the Communist Party, he not only lost his home and business but also risked imprisonment and a possible death penalty, but he had no regrets. In exile in London he continued to give his support to the SACP, the ANC and the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and was a regular attender of public meetings and demonstrations until ill-health called a halt.

Jack Woddis, the head of the British Communist Party's international department for 15 years, died in London on September 11, 1980. His death was a loss not only to the British working class but also to the international labour movement to the advancement of which he had devoted his life.

Jack Woddis had a close relationship with the South African Communist Party, to which he gave every possible assistance. Many articles from his

pen appeared in the pages of *The African Communist*.

Speaking at his funeral, our national chairman Dr Yusuf Dadoo said: "We in Africa had in him a staunch friend and ally in the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism, and for national and social emancipation. His writings and books on Africa made a positive contribution to the proper understanding of the manifold problems facing the peoples of Africa, and helped a great deal in the spread of Marxist thinking on our continent."

“We in the national liberation movement of South Africa headed by the African National Congress have every cause to remember Comrade Woddis for the deep and abiding interest with which he supported our struggle against the racist South African regime and for the achievement of People’s Power. It is no exaggeration to say that he made our cause his own and as head of the international department of the CPGB he was tireless in his efforts to mobilise the British labour movement for solidarity action against apartheid.”

The African Communist dips its banner in salute to these and other fallen comrades and conveys heartfelt condolences to their families and friends.

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All the chorus of calumny, which the party of order never fail, in their orgies of blood, to raise against their victims, only proves that the bourgeois of our days considers himself the legitimate successor to the Baron of old, who thought every weapon in his own hand fair against the plebeian, while in the hands of the plebeian a weapon of any kind constituted a crime.

## Karl Marx

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MOSES MABHIDA — OUR NEW GENERAL SECRETARY

The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party has elected comrade Moses Mabhida to fill the place of general secretary which has been vacant since the death of Moses Kotane in May 1978. In doing so it has chosen one of the outstanding political leaders of the day who has proved his stature, ability and stamina in all the struggles of our people for national liberation and social advance which have taken place during the last 40 years.

That Moses Mabhida enjoys the confidence of the oppressed people of South Africa is demonstrated by the fact that he is a member of the Political Bureau of the SA Communist Party, and of the national executives of the African National Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions — positions which he has occupied for many years. He is also a member of the Revolutionary Council which is directing the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the apartheid regime in South Africa and put an end to white domination and oppression once and for all.

Moses Mbheki Mncane Mabhida was born on October 14, 1923, at

Thornville in the district of Pietermaritzburg, Natal. His father Stimela was of peasant stock, but some time after Moses was born the family was driven off the land by the cutting up of farms and Stimela entered into employment in the Electricity Department in Maritzburg.

Moses' mother, Anna Nobuzi, born Phakathi, was of Christian upbringing and had received some education. She made efforts to teach Stimela to read and write. Despite her education, the only employment she was able to obtain was as a washerwoman. Having perceived the advantage of knowledge and training, she made every effort to ensure that her children received the best possible education. However, she died in 1928, while Moses was still a small boy. There were seven in the Mabhida family, and Moses had three sisters and three brothers. Not all are still living. His eldest sister died in 1928, his eldest brother Mathonto died of epilepsy in 1932, while his remaining two brothers Reuben and Nyoni died during the flu epidemic of 1973 in Pietermaritzburg.

Link With ICU

Moses' father Stimela had a great interest in politics and was a radical member of the ICU, the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union founded by Clements Kadalie which shook the South African political scene in the 1920s. It was his father's political leanings which greatly influenced Moses, though he recalls that Stimela was no theoretician but an African nationalist pure and simple. His politics were based on his deep resentment at the theft of the land from the African people by the white settlers. To him it was a straightforward question of colonialism and he longed for the restoration of African independence.

Although working for the Pietermaritzburg Electricity Department for the beggarly sum of £1 a week, Stimela was still able to live with his family on a farm on the fringe of the city known as Mkhondeni, owned by a Col. Foxon. Moses Mabhida worked as a herd-boy, while his two brothers worked on the farm for six months in the year, earning one shilling a week.

Moses Mabhida started going to school in 1932, but had to leave after the first term and go back to herding goats again. But in 1933 he was allowed to return to school in New England, just outside Pietermaritzburg. From the beginning he developed a liking for history. By 1939 he had passed standard 4. The following year, after the outbreak of the second world war, he started in standard 5 at the Buchanan Street intermediate school, but after completing standard 5 the school was amalgamated with another school at a place called Slangspruit.

This school had a different principal and a larger staff of teachers, whose number was augmented in 1941 by an intake of newly qualified teachers, one of whom was Themba Harry Gwala, later to become secretary of the Railway Workers' Union, SACTU and ANC leader in Maritzburg, now serving a sentence of life imprisonment after being convicted in the 1977 Pietermaritzburg ANC trial under the Terrorism and Suppression of Communism Acts for recruiting people for military training and attempting to overthrow the South African government by force and violence. Gwala had earlier served 8 years on Robben Island, from 1964 to 1972, for a similar offence.

It was Gwala who became Moses Mabhida's political teacher. When the Soviet Union was invaded by the Hitlerite armies on June 22, 1941, Gwala got together a small group of senior boys at school, among them Moses Mabhida, and started giving them the correct line on the war. Up to then most Africans had wanted to have nothing to do with the country's war effort. Their attitude was that it would be a good thing if the British were defeated and they could be liberated from British colonialism and the tyranny of Boer racism. Gwala explained to them that the whole character of the war had been altered by the involvement in the conflict of the world's first socialist state the Soviet Union, whose preservation was in the interests of working people everywhere. Gwala also explained to them that the involvement of the Soviet Union was a guarantee that an allied victory would result in a total defeat for the forces of fascism — something by no means clear during the earlier period of the phoney-war.

Class Struggle

It was through Gwala that Moses Mabhida and his fellow pupils first came into contact with the *Guardian* newspaper, the main voice of the liberation movement and the cause of the working class, as well as pamphlets produced by the Communist Party of South Africa. Through these classes and the reading which went with them, a new element entered the political thinking of the students, an understanding of the relationship between the class struggle and the fight for national liberation, a conviction that the problems of their country and the world, problems created by capitalism, could only be solved by socialism, the ending of private enterprise and profit-seeking and the introduction of social ownership and control of the means of production and distribution.

During week-ends, Gwala took Mabhida with him to meet the comrades who were doing trade union work in Pietermaritzburg, and he met workers

in the chemical industry, especially those employed by the Natal Wattle and Extract Company. He also came into contact with workers in the distributive industry and slowly began to help in the work of organising a trade union. Amongst those with whom he worked was Sathi Mungul, at that time secretary of the Pietermaritzburg district of the Communist Party, and that was the beginning of Mabhida's connection with the Communist Party, which he joined in December 1942. He was also inevitably drawn into the activities of the African National Congress, where at that time the leadership of the veteran A.W.G. Champion was being challenged by the youth, who were demanding more militant policies.

Moses Mabhida was not able to continue with his schooling much longer. Although he had a great desire to further his education, his family were unable to find the means to enable him to do so. After passing standard 7 he had to leave school and start working. His first job was in a military establishment, where he worked as a waiter, but as the war began to wind down and the camps started to be dismantled, he was transferred to work building a new railway line for the transport of war material to a storage point. When the line was completed, he was discharged. Through members of the Communist Party he found employment in a co-operative society, where he was active in the distributive workers' union.

Defiance Campaign

It was the great defiance campaign of 1952 which proved a watershed in Moses Mabhida's life. Many members of the Communist Party who had been active in the trade union movement had been banned by the government under the Suppression of Communism Act, among them Themba Gwala. The Pietermaritzburg district party committee suggested that Moses Mabhida should give up his job and start working full-time for the trade union movement. He started with the Howick Rubber Workers' Union and the chemical workers in Pietermaritzburg. But as one by one comrades were forced to leave their jobs under the Suppression of Communism Act, Moses Mabhida had steadily to extend the scope of his work. His political and trade union work spread from Pietermaritzburg to Durban and other parts of Natal.

The process was speeded up and his contacts became more extensive during the preparations for the Congress of the People in 1955, when he toured many areas in Natal organising meetings and collecting demands for inclusion in the Freedom Charter which was eventually adopted at

Kliptown. 1955 was also the year of the foundation of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). As an active trade unionist Moses Mabhida was invited to participate in SACTU's first congress in Johannesburg in March and was elected one of the four vice-presidents.

Most people involved in the preparations for the Congress of the People were eventually arrested in the famous treason trial which lasted from 1956 to 1961. To this day, Mabhida cannot explain why he, too, was not arrested. But as most Natal activists were swept off to jail and tied down for years in that case, his centre of operations had to shift to Durban, where the main work of the trade union and political movement in Natal was concentrated. He and other comrades had to try to fill the gaps created by the government repression.

Moses Mabhida became one of the main driving forces in the organisation of the unorganised workers in Natal during the 1950s. Under his guidance as chairman of the local committee of SACTU, the railway workers were built into a powerful union and the Durban stevedores were led through a series of militant strike actions to the point where the daily-paid (togt) system with all its uncertainties was abolished and the workers were for the first time placed on a weekly-paid basis with a guaranteed minimum wage. Mabhida also took over the Dairy Workers' Union formerly organised by Natal Indian Congress leader Kay Moonsamy and helped with the baking workers and other workers in the food industry. He also helped launch the General Workers' Union in Durban which unorganised workers in all industries and undertakings were invited to join as a first step on the road to trade unionism especially suited to the conditions of migrant labour. He continued with his work for the Howick rubber workers and at the national conference of SACTU in 1956 was able to report that bus and laundry workers in Maritzburg were also being organised.

In all this trade union work the workers were frequently involved in violent clashes with the police, usually called in by the bosses at the first sign of trouble, and like most other trade unionists in South Africa, Moses Mabhida was never under any illusions about the possibility or desirability of "keeping politics out of the trade unions". The chairman's inaugural statement to the founding conference of SACTU in 1955 stressed:

"You cannot separate politics and the way in which people are governed from their bread and butter, or their freedom to move to and from places where they can find the best employment, or the houses they live in, or the type of education their children get. These things are of vital concern to the workers . . . The

trade unions must be active in the political field as they are in the economic sphere because the two hang together and cannot be isolated from each other" (Quoted in *Organise or Starve*, the History of SACTU, by Ken Luckhardt and Brenda Wall, p.97.)

Inevitably Moses Mabhida played his part in the political field, becoming chairman of the ANC working committee in Natal and chairman of the Durban district committee of the Communist Party by the end of the 1950s. He was active in the £1 a day campaign launched by the Congress movement and took a key part in preparations for the 1958 stay-at-home called from April 14 to 16 in support of this and a number of political demands. Though the strike call had a mixed reception in some parts of the country, Moses Mabhida, touring Durban with Billy Nair and M.P. Naicker at the end of the first day thought it had been very successful, and regretted the decision taken by the leadership in Johannesburg to call it off.

Women's Fight

With Dorothy Nyembe, now serving a 15-year sentence for "harbouring terrorists", Moses Mabhida participated in the mass movement of the Natal African women which erupted in 1959. The campaign had started in support of the potato boycott launched by the ANC in protest against the brutal treatment of African labourers on the potato farms of the Transvaal. In Natal the women took the lead in this campaign, demonstrating in many centres against those who were still buying potatoes. In the full flush of their enthusiasm they broadened the campaign to include a protest against the extension of passes to African women, a boycott of municipal beerhalls, and a campaign against the system of forced unpaid labour by African women at government dipping tanks, in the course of which 75% of the government dipping tanks in the Natal Inland Police division were destroyed.

The intensity of feeling amongst the African women, their militancy and efficiency of organisation surprised both their menfolk and the police, who were at a loss to know how to deal with them. Mabhida feels that had the magnificent leadership provided by the Natal women been followed up at that time, the resistance movement could have spread rapidly throughout the country with incalculable consequences, such was the mass resentment at the time against the repressive policies of the Nationalist Government.

It was during these years that Mabhida was thrown increasingly into contact with ANC President General Chief Albert Lutuli, and the

relationship between them grew so close that, in Mabhida's own words, "at every conference where Chief was, I had to be". It was two Communists, Moses Kotane and Moses Mabhida, who made Chief Lutuli realise the crucial importance of the working-class movement in the struggle for liberation. As the man on the spot, Moses Mabhida drew Chief Lutuli nearer to the trade union movement. In his public speeches Chief Lutuli began to refer to the work of the ANC as complementary to that of the trade unions. The collaboration of the ANC, the Natal Indian Congress and SACTU in Natal was close and intimate largely because of the thread of working-class activity and struggle which united their members of all races at the rank-and-file level.

On the expiry of his banning order, Chief Lutuli was able to deliver a key message to the SACTU conference in March, 1959 and Moses Mabhida comments:

"The ANC was no longer the organisation of chiefs and nobles. It was now an organisation of ordinary people (and) the Chief himself had participated in reconstructing his part of the ANC. Therefore he had a high regard for workers in a practical sense and for their participation in the struggle and I think he had made a proper assessment. The very fact that they are the spear, the fighting side, indicated that he understood their role in the struggle". (*Organise or Starve*, p 358.)

In 1959 SACTU elected Moses Mabhida and Viola Hashe to present the case of the South African workers at the Geneva meeting of the International Labour Organisation, but they were prevented by the government from leaving the country. The stooge Lucy Mvubelo of the so-called Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA), however, was given a passport by the government to enable her to go to Geneva.

For Moses Mabhida the work of organisation and agitation continued unabated. At the memorial meeting for the 435 miners buried in the Coalbrook disaster in February 1960, Moses Mabhida said:

"These workers have built the wealth they never earned. They have made South Africa glitter with gold but they have not a rag to cover their bodies . . . How does this happen? We demand from the government that it pays full compensation and a lifetime pension to the families of the miners. We know millions of pounds will never pay back the lives of the fallen — they will only be paid back by our efforts to work together". (*New Age*, February 11, 1960.)

In the same week it was announced that, following a strike of over 500 African workers which forced the closure of the Hammarsdale clothing factory where wages far below the urban level were being paid, a warrant

had been issued for the arrest of Moses Mabhida, as chairman of SACTU, on a charge of incitement. Billy Nair, secretary of the African Clothing Workers' Union, and Johannes Hlongwane, the secretary of the union, had already been arrested on the same charge.

Undeterred, Moses Mabhida continued to work at a furious pace. At a mass meeting in the Durban City Hall later in the same month a three phase struggle was launched against forced removals at Cato Manor and the proposal of the Group Areas Board to proclaim the area "white". In a fighting speech punctuated with wild applause and shouts of "Afrika", Moses Mabhida said the vicious plans of the Group Areas Board must be opposed with all the strength that the people possessed. At another meeting in the same week Mabhida on behalf of the ANC announced a campaign to boycott a leading Durban baking company which had reneged on a previous promise to recognise the African Baking Workers' Union and where the conditions of the workers had become intolerable.

Sharpeville

Matters came to a head after the massacres at Sharpeville and Langa on March 21, 1960, when 73 Africans were shot dead by the racist police for peacefully protesting against the pass laws. Following the decision of the African National Congress to stage a one-day protest on the following Monday, marked by the mass burning of passes, Moses Mabhida, by decision of his comrades, was the first in Durban to put his hated book into the flames. Two days later the government declared a state of emergency and arrested 2,000 political leaders throughout the country.

Before the police could lay hands on him, Moses Mabhida was ordered by the SACTU national executive to leave the country and put the workers' case to the International Labour Organisation and generally organise solidarity actions abroad. After a few days underground, he left South Africa on April 6 for Lesotho. From there he made his way to Botswana and in September was flown, together with a number of Congressmen and refugees, to Accra in a special airlift organised by the Ghana government. On September 30 he started work as SACTU representative with the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

In exile Moses Mabhida has worked ceaselessly to further the cause of the South African liberation movement, both by promoting solidarity activity, and by engaging in the direct work of the Revolutionary Council. Together with Wilton Mkwayi he represented SACTU at the inaugural conference of the All-African Trade Union Federation held at Casablanca,

Morocco, in May 1961. In July of the same year he attended a conference of the international trade union committee for solidarity with the South African workers in Accra held under the auspices of the WFTU, SACTU and the Ghana TUC and roused the delegates with a fiery speech denouncing the imperialist powers for the support they gave to the apartheid regime. In 1962 he helped promote the campaign launched by Barbara Castle, Labour MP and chairman of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, demanding the imposition of sanctions and an immediate arms embargo against South Africa. The workers would be the first to suffer from the arms build-up, said Moses Mabhida in a statement to the press in London. A bloodbath in which both black and white would die could be averted only if the world was prepared to do something about it.

In 1962 Moses Mabhida was one of the delegates at the secret ANC conference held in Gaborone and attended by prominent ANC leaders from inside and outside the country at which the programme of action against the racist regime was discussed. Mabhida presented a report on the trade union situation. Seven years later he was also one of the leading participants at the historic Morogoro conference where the ANC's strategy and tactics were elaborated to the most sophisticated dimension ever in the history of the organisation.

Umkhonto Activist

In 1963, while still attached to WFTU headquarters, Moses Mabhida was instructed by ANC President O. R. Tambo to leave the solidarity field and devote himself full-time to the work of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the liberation movement. With the approval of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party, he undertook this task on which he has been engaged full-time in the ensuing period.

In selecting Moses Mabhida as their general secretary, the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party have secured the services of a man tried and tested in a thousand battles during the course of the national liberation struggle. He is known, loved and respected throughout the movement for his steadfastness and determination, for his far-sightedness and wisdom, for his steadiness under fire, for his loyalty and consistency. Placing the interests of his people and his class above self, he has devoted his life to the cause of emancipation, never sparing himself in his day-to-day work, ready to answer any call that is made on him by his comrades. Above all, he is his own man, firm of character, unshakeable in his convictions.

Moses Mabhida is not only African nationalist but also proletarian internationalist, convinced by his readings in Marxism-Leninism as well as by his own experience of the indestructible bond between the forces of national liberation and the international communist movement. He has studied and travelled widely in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and met many of the world communist leaders at international meetings and conferences. We can think of no better person to fill the place left vacant by our late lamented comrade Moses Kotane who served so long and so honourably as the general secretary of our party.



UNITY AND ORGANISATION MEAN VICTORY

*Resolution on the current situation
adopted by the Political Bureau of the
South African Communist Party —
September 1980*

The current situation is marked by a growing series of confrontations between the people and the ruling class. Not a day passes without some expression of organised militancy flaring up, now here and now there, especially in the factories, amongst the youth and in the black ghettos. In general it can be said that the ingredients of a major nationwide upsurge are being built up with relative speed. Events since the beginning of 1980 have already dramatically borne out the main thrust of the analysis contained in the statement adopted by the November 1979 augmented meeting of our Central Committee. That meeting expressed the belief that we were about to enter a decade in which some of the most decisive battles in the long history of our struggle would be fought out. Amongst all strata of our oppressed people a renewed sense of anticipation and a mood of revolutionary fervour were emerging. That mood has already begun to express itself on a wide front.

Amongst the workers the strike movement has grown in intensity. In the last few months alone more than 75,000 have downed tools in factories all over the country in support of their demands for improved working and living conditions, as well as for independent democratic trade unions. The traditional boss-police alliance against striking workers has failed to dampen their militancy. The attempt by the racist regime to impose 'good boy' unions is meeting with growing opposition. A significant feature of these workers' struggles has been the support for the striking workers by broader strata of our people, as was demonstrated in the Monis and Fattis and the red meat strikes, in both of which widespread consumer boycotts reinforced the workers' efforts.

Amongst the youth we have witnessed once again an impressive resurgence of the struggle against racist and inferior education. Already this year over 100,000 students have defied police batons and bullets, and many of them have given, and continue to give, their lives in protracted demonstrations. These demonstrations covered political slogans and demands going beyond the issue of inferior education.

New regions such as the OFS – the very heartland of hardline racism which were relatively dormant in the 1970s are also now emerging as storm centres. Although the main impetus came from the Coloured schools and universities, tens of thousands of students from the African and Indian schools and universities showed their solidarity in many areas of the country. In the teeth of opposition and threats of violence and other reprisals from their government-imposed leaders, the youth of the Transkei, Ciskei, KwaZulu, Venda and other Bantustans, demonstrated in solidarity with students in the rest of the country.

The regime's aim to create division between the students, the parents and the community generally has not met with success, and the solidarity displayed between these sections has become a reinforcing feature of the renewed upsurge in the school boycott movement. In general, the massive intervention of our youth and students in the broad struggle for liberation has become a permanent and distinctive feature of our revolutionary process.

Labour Reserves

In the Bantustans and other rural areas the full meaning of the regime's fragmentation policy is daily becoming more evident as more and more of our people are being herded into these labour reserves incapable of

providing the inhabitants with even the bare necessities of life. Whatever illusions may have existed about the farce of tribal 'nationhood' have been shattered by the realities of life in those areas which have already been forced into 'independence'. In Winterveldt, in the Soekmekaar region, and in many other areas of the countryside, resistance to resettlement is maintained and resentment grows against the Bantustan structures which are there to receive the mass deportees into the cesspool of 'homeland' poverty.

In the towns, too, the deepening resentment against the Bantustans grows by the day as the fight of the urban dwellers to live and work in the towns is increasingly undermined by the monstrous fiction that they are 'foreign' workers in the white man's preserve, and by the ever ready use of the Bantustans to provide scab labour, as was demonstrated in the heroic Johannesburg Municipal workers' strike.

In the urban black ghettos the communities are resisting the regime's efforts to raise the prices of the public services such as housing, transport, etc. Militant responses to threatened rent increases are in evidence everywhere. Bus boycotts lasting weeks and sometimes months have been the people's answer to increases in transport fares. The mood in favour of rejecting the new urban council system remains strong.

Black community organisations and other mass-based bodies are sprouting in all the major urban centres to help defend the people against the regime's predatory manipulation of their lives. Fearless outspokenness and mass involvement in broad political activities revolving around the Year of the Freedom Charter and the Free Mandela campaign have been extremely encouraging. In the Free Mandela campaign, already over 70,000 individuals have courageously put down their names and addresses in a public petition to demand the release of the symbol of revolutionary resistance to the whole system of racist supremacy.

Amongst the oppressed black communities the enemy's traditional divide-and-rule policy is meeting with serious obstacles. As a result of mounting opposition, the regime has been forced to withdraw its completely farcical separate advisory body for Africans and is frantically attempting to gain collaboration from among strata in the Coloured and Indian communities for its new Presidential Council. This council not only excludes the African majority completely, but also denies the Coloured and Indian participants any form of legislative or executive decision-making powers.

There can be no doubt that those individuals who may be tempted to

participate in a body whose clear purpose is to divide the black people and to perpetuate race domination in a new form, will experience the wrath of the masses. The oppressed people reject with contempt the new racist argument which absurdly claims that South Africa consists of colour and ethnic minorities. They see it as yet another ideological device to justify and perpetuate minority race rule in our land. The struggle for majority rule in one united South Africa remains the goal of all true patriots.

Armed Struggle

The perspective of the destruction of racist rule and the seizure of people's power by mass political action combined with escalating *armed blows against the enemy* has been reinforced as never before by the heroic actions of our people's armed force — Umkhonto we Sizwe. The latest attacks on the Sasol complexes stunned the whole world with their level of sophistication, and instilled confidence amongst the masses in the growing capacity of our liberation movement to answer the enemy in the only language he understands. For the oppressed majority in our land, names like Orlando, Moroka, Soekmekaar, Booysens, Silverton and Sasol have become inspiring symbols of heroism and courage: they have contributed immeasurably to the militant fervour and uncompromising resistance to race rule in all its forms which is sweeping our land. The tens of thousands who bravely paid tribute to our Silverton heroes represent a people who have become convinced as never before that the revolutionary overthrow of the racist ruling class is the only real way forward.

A significant feature of the current situation is the unprecedented and growing adherence of the mass of our people to *the leadership role of our liberation movement headed by the African National Congress*. With each passing day the stature of our movement and its unchallengeable place in the vanguard of the people's struggles grow. Both externally and internally we have emerged as a force to be reckoned with: a force which is feared by the enemy and its allies and looked to by the mass of our oppressed people to show and lead the way to their salvation. In the four years since the great Soweto upsurge, we have demonstrated through the dedication and sacrifice of our cadres in the underground, and through the calibre of our ideological guidance, that the only real alternative to the scourge of racist exploitation is our liberation front. Our great South African Communist Party, which celebrates the 60th year of its formation in July 1981, can be truly proud of its own contribution to the revolutionary alliance.

The mood of the people and the political atmosphere in which our struggle is unfolding clearly present an urgent and continuing challenge to every sector of our liberation movement. At the moment the outbursts of resistance are gaining in momentum and present a serious challenge to the enemy. But they still lack the necessary level of co-ordination and the quality of united offensive of the whole people. It is only our liberation front which has the understanding and the leadership qualities to channel and co-ordinate the people's militancy and to raise it to even higher levels.

Our Central Committee statement of November 1979 stressed that as the new decade dawns we are called upon to be ready as never before to take up the challenge which faces us. It emphasised that the people will increasingly be looking to the ANC and its allies to show the way of struggle and to lead them to final victory. This sense of expectation and anticipation has grown immeasurably since these words were written. It is clear that the tasks which were enumerated in the document require to be pursued with an even greater sense of urgency at this moment.

Greater Efforts

Although major advances have been made in the areas of general mass political mobilisation and organisation, and in the strengthening of our organised underground presence, the situation cries out for even greater efforts. We must work more urgently than ever to strengthen our capacity to lead the people on the ground, and to strengthen our underground apparatus to the point where it will be capable of responding to and taking initiatives, not only from day to day, but also from hour to hour. Internal collective underground leadership at all levels – national, regional and local – must be reinforced and strengthened with all possible speed.

Everything possible must be done to mobilise and organise the black working men and women, to arouse their revolutionary consciousness to even greater heights, as well as to sharpen an awareness of their historic mission as the dominant force in the struggle for national liberation and the building of a socialist society. More immediately, the fight for genuine trade union organisation and improved working and living conditions must be vigorously stepped up. We must demand an end to the massive unemployment, an end to the ravages of the pass laws and influx control system and an end to the triple burden of oppression and exploitation from which black women suffer.

The masses of our people forced to live in their rural slums in the Bantustans must be shown the way forward and organised in struggle

against the collaborators and for the utter destruction of the whole Bantustan framework. The struggle against so-called Bantustan 'independence' continues to occupy one of the most important sectors of the immediate battles we face.

Gatsha Buthelezi, who presents himself as a friend of the ANC, has lately intensified his campaigns to divert the peoples away from the revolutionary policies and strategy of our liberation movement in many areas of struggle. He has aided the enemy by his persistent condemnation of the people whenever they engage in mass action, whether it be in the factories or in the schools. Despite his continuing positive opposition to the idea of Bantustan independence, it is our duty to oppose and condemn his harmful and dangerous role in the present upsurge.

Unity in action between all the oppressed black communities occupies one of the prime places in our strategy for the destruction of the racist regime. The struggle against the Bantustans and against the latest Presidential Council has a common content for all the black oppressed. There can be no compromise on one man one vote in one united South Africa.

The fighting youth of our land, who for years have taken the brunt of the enemy's batons and bullets, must see at their side in ever greater numbers the reinforcing solidarity of all strata of the oppressed people. Our whole liberation movement must strengthen its underground presence in all the youth centres of resistance.

Forward to Socialism

Both as a Party and as part of the alliance of revolutionary forces, we are conscious of the heavy responsibilities ahead. With absolute confidence in the justness of our cause, we are certain that our people will destroy the racist tyranny, win people's power and move on to build a socialist South Africa. We reiterate what our Central Committee said at its augmented meeting last year:

"We the people of South Africa know that there is no power that can withstand our organised force. Despite the most savage repression, we have demonstrated in action our inexhaustible capacity to develop new forms of mass struggle, uniting more and more people and extending mass action and resistance to all fronts. Wherever we are, and at all levels and in all fields — at our work places, in the urban and rural areas where we live, in the schools, universities, churches, cultural and sports clubs — we must mobilise ourselves and confront the enemy as never before. We must support every act of resistance and draw it into the mainstream of revolt."

UNITY AND ORGANISATION MEAN VICTORY!
LONG LIVE OUR LIBERATION ALLIANCE HEADED BY THE ANC!
LONG LIVE THE SACPI
LONG LIVE THE UNITY OF THE PATRIOTIC FORCES OF OUR
COUNTRY!
DEATH TO RACISM!
FORWARD TO PEOPLE'S POWER!
VICTORY IS CERTAIN!
AMANDLA! MAATLA!



NAMIBIA: NO MORE KATUTURA

by T. Singh

Katutura township is a black ghetto on the outskirts of Windhoek, the political and administrative capital of apartheid-dominated Namibia. In the language of the Herero people of Namibia, Katutura means "we have no permanent resting place". This colonial condition, first imposed on the Namibian people by the Germans in 1884, persists today, despite the United Nations' termination of the mandate granted to South Africa in 1920 to administer the territory.

Throughout Namibia's long history of colonialism three forces have combined to prevent genuine independence for the country and its people the giant transnational corporations operating in Namibia, the white minority racists who enjoy privilege and power inside Namibia, and the apartheid regime itself. To unravel the special benefits accruing to these reactionary forces from Namibia's continued exploitation is to disentangle the web of intrigue, deception and terror that characterises the Namibian question today.

White Namibians — Boer-Junker Feudalism

The pattern of social, political and economic domination by the white minority commenced with the German occupation of Namibia in 1884 and the influx of German settlers. It continued when South Africa was granted a mandate to administer the territory by the Versailles Treaty of 1920 which wound up the first World War. White immigration expanded, and with it, the further dispossession of the African majority from the richest land. All resistance was savagely crushed by both German and South African colonialists.

Commercial agriculture and fishing on an extensive scale date from these times. Nine major fishing companies and groups dominate the fishing industry. In 1971 net profits amounted to some 11.48 million dollars.¹ In the main the companies are South African owned and the taxes paid to the South African revenue. Over the years, however, much evidence has been collected that overfishing by factory ships has reduced the pilchard stock to critical levels. Much of the tinned pilchards find their way to South Africa's main trading partners in the west.

Extensive farming on capitalist lines is the major economic activity of the local whites in Namibia. Enormous profits accrue from beef, dairy cattle and karakul sheep-raising and the export of their products to the South African and western markets. Migrant labour, paid wages far below its value, is the source of the huge profits accruing to white farmers. In 1971 some 65,000 African workers were employed as contract labourers on 5,000 farms. Whilst the agricultural workers worked for a mere pittance profits were estimated to run into some 75 million dollars.²

Land allocation for occupation and ownership has always been on strictly racial lines. Approximately 61% of the land has been set aside for white ownership and occupation within an area that contains the richest soil, grazing land and mineral deposits of the country. The rest of the country is divided into 10 homelands according to the recommendations of the Odendaal Commission of 1964. Concentrated in the least economically viable parts of the country the homelands provide one commodity which is in abundance — labour power. It is from the homelands, suffering from economic want and deprivation, that the vast stream of migrant labourers are forced into the mines, agricultural estates, ranches, fisheries and factories of the monopolies, South African, local and international.

African workers make up 90% of the workforce on the mines and farms and approximately 50% in the industrial sector. The income differential between whites and blacks is 20:1.³ As in South Africa, white Namibians,

nearly 60% of whom are of South African origin, are a privileged minority whose affluence is the direct result of the extreme exploitation of black Namibians. They form the social base of reaction and counter-revolution within Namibia.

The Transnational Corporations

Namibia's economy, however, is dominated by the giant multinationals from South Africa and the western capitalist countries. Namibia has extensive deposits of diamonds, uranium, copper, iron, lead, lithium, manganese, sulphur, tin, vanadium, tungsten, silver, zinc, cadmium, tin and semi-precious stones. They constitute the strategic mineral base of the economy and have attracted the operations of the transnational corporations, particularly those with their headquarters in the countries of the Western Contact Group. Currently, these transnationals can be divided by their countries of origin as follows:

Great Britain: Charter Consolidated, Rio Tinto Zinc, Consolidated Gold Fields, Selection Trust.

United States: Tsumeb Corporation, AMAX, Newmont Mining Corporation, Falconbridge Nickel Mines

South Africa: Anglo-American Corporation, Consolidated Diamond Mines, Federale Volksbeleggings, Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa, ISCOR, Johannesburg Consolidated Investment, Union Corporation.

France: Minatome SA, Total, Aquitaine.

West Germany: Metallgesellschaft AG, Urangesellschaft AG, Otavi Mining and Railways Corporation.

Canada: Falconbridge Nickel Mines, Oamites Mining Company, Rio Algom, Consolidated Mining and Smelting, Etosha Petroleum.¹⁰

In 1970 probably the single largest mining conglomerate was set up to exploit Namibia's uranium deposits – Rossing Uranium Ltd. In 1974 shares in this vast enterprise were distributed as follows.

RTZ	48.5% (United Kingdom)
Rio Algom	10.0% (Canada)
Total	10.0% (France)
IDC	13.2% (South Africa)
General Mining	6.8% (South Africa)
Others*	11.5%

(* Urangesellschaft of the FRG holds an undisclosed number of shares in the enterprise).⁵

Like Rossing, most of the companies are conglomerates with interlocking directorships and share participation. Profits, and therefore taxes accruing to the apartheid state from the operations of these transnational corporations, run into multi-millions. It is conservatively estimated that profits in 1971 amounted to 12 million dollars before tax. The South African regime netted a cool 37,230,000 dollars in taxes ⁶ *The Economist* estimated that the profits to Consolidated Diamond Mines, owned by De Beers, a subsidiary of Anglo-American, amounted to 96 million dollars in 1975. This from a single source in Oranjemund where diamond deposits are calculated to be the largest in the world. The Tsumeb Corporation accounted for 80% of the total production of base metals and produced profits of 17 million dollars for its owners in 1974.⁷

More than anything else the huge profits extracted and repatriated from Namibia explain why the South African regime and its imperialist allies are unwilling to make any significant moves toward genuine independence for Namibia.

The South Africans: skin specialists

The major obstacle to Namibia's independence is the South African fascist regime. South Africa's intransigence in the face of the world condemnation, its blood and iron policy against the Namibian people and their liberation movement, SWAPO, and its acts of aggression and destruction against Zambia and especially the People's Republic of Angola, are a compound of political, economic and strategic considerations.

Economically, the taxes paid by the transnationals into the South African state coffers form a substantial source of revenue for funding the regime's huge military and economic development programme. Militarily, Namibia remains the single most advanced base for the racist-fascist army to strike against the independent African states. Northern Namibia and the eastern Caprivi are daggers pointed at the heart of Zambia, Angola and Zimbabwe.

The political consequences of a SWAPO-led independent Namibia are all too obvious. The Pretoria regime would then be completely isolated in southern Africa with its capability to withstand the mounting mass-based armed actions led by the ANC severely weakened. There is a further consideration in the Namibian equation which is crucial for the South Africans — that is the role of Namibia's uranium deposits. It has become manifest that South Africa plans to be the major supplier of not only

uranium, but importantly, enriched uranium to the west. At the same time its own ambitious nuclear development strategy requires access to the Namibian deposits through its holding in the Rossing venture.

Given such a development strategy the apartheid regime calculates that if the western powers show any signs of wavering on the issue of black majority rule in South Africa, it will be in a position to dictate terms to its allies. Already, South Africa is the third largest supplier of this strategic mineral to the western countries, and the major source of uranium for Great Britain, France and West Germany.

Revolution vs Reaction: a summing up

Yet neither the South Africans nor the transnationals and the local white supremacists within Namibia can pretend to be in control of the process of change in Namibia. Despite the ferocious brutality of the South African occupation forces against the Namibian people and their vanguard, SWAPO, the initiative for change remains largely in the hands of the liberation movement.

The inability of the reactionary forces to dictate the scope and content of change in Namibia can be seen from the following:

1. Despite the massive build-up of men and war machines in Namibia, estimated variously at between 60,000 and 100,000 troops, the racist war machine has been unable to contain the growing armed struggle conducted by SWAPO and supported by the Namibian people. Indeed, the SWAPO guerillas are successfully establishing themselves among the people.
2. The Pretoria racists and the governments of the western capitalist countries as much as the white supremacists have been forced to abandon the notion of white domination pure and simple, and are busy seeking a neo-colonial solution to the Namibian question.
3. The South African regime has been forced to recognise that no solution to the Namibian question is possible without the full participation of SWAPO, and that independence for Namibia can only come about by the will of the majority of the people expressed through free and fair elections under the supervision and control of the United Nations.

Much of the present manoeuvrings by the South Africans and the so-called western Contact Group of Five stem from recognition of these realities. The central issues facing them are those of preserving the power and profits of the transnationals and undermining, as far as is possible and by all means, the growing strength and stature of SWAPO among the mass of Namibians.

Neo-colonialism: black masks, white faces

The roots of the neo-colonial strategy can be traced back to South Africa's ignominious defeat in 1975/76 at the hands of the MPLA and the people of Angola, supported by Cuba and the socialist community. Much else that has happened since then, like the recent victory of the patriotic forces in Zimbabwe and the heightened level of mass and armed confrontation inside South Africa and Namibia, has led to renewed attempts to impose a neo-colonialist situation. In this, the imperialist powers have played a significant role, as can be seen from the following chronology of events:

In January, 1976, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 385 providing for free and fair elections to be held under UN supervision and control. South Africa refused to comply, and instead announced its own plan for elections in Namibia, recognising the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) as representative of the Namibian peoples' wishes. The conference establishing the DTA had itself been convened by South Africa, then in earnest search of its own Muzorewas.

In April, 1977, the South Africans accepted the proposals by the DTA to set up a National Assembly and announced its own elections for December, 1978. The search for black collaborators had partially succeeded as the proposed National Assembly was to be composed of a number of tribal authorities within the DTA. Alarmed at the call for mandatory economic sanctions, the USA, Great Britain, France, Canada and West Germany (the Contact Group) urged the United States to allow them an opportunity of negotiating with South Africa to accept UN supervised and controlled elections and stop the South Africans from granting "executive powers" to the Assembly.

In April, 1978, South Africa announced its acceptance of UN supervised (but not UN controlled) elections. At the same time it mounted the most savage repression against SWAPO and its followers. In May of that year the SWAPO refugee camp at Kassinga in Angola was attacked. The South Africans massacred more than 800 unarmed men, women and children.

In December, 1978 the South Africans forced gun-point elections on Namibia. The DTA emerged, not surprisingly, as the largest single party. These elections flew in the face of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 435 adopted in November 1978 calling for elections in Namibia under the supervision of UN civilian and military personnel.

Throughout 1979 and 1980 the South Africans put forward one reason or another for not complying with the provisions of the Waldheim Plan for implementing Resolution 435 of 1978. In the meantime, innumerable

meetings continued between the Contact Group and the South Africans.

What has brought matters to a head now is that the original reason for the Contact Group to negotiate with South Africa has fallen by the wayside the DTA dominated National Assembly has now been transformed into a "Council of Ministers" with full "executive powers", thereby becoming the de facto "internal government" of Namibia. What role now for the Contact Group?

The chronology of events suggest that the South African racists have in the three years since the Contact Group became active in promoting a "solution" succeeded in creating their own "internal settlement" as well as warding off the threat of mandatory sanctions.

Nothing more clearly reveals the complicity of the imperialist powers in maintaining the rule of the racists and monopolies in Namibia. They have provided South Africa with an important breathing period within which to consolidate its position in Namibia and launch a murderous onslaught against the people of Namibia, SWAPO and the front-line states of Zambia and Angola. At the same time, at precisely the moment when the Pretoria fascists stood completely isolated in the international arena, the imperialists have succeeded in giving South Africa respectability despite its crimes against the Namibian people. If the South Africans have succeeded in defying the United Nations, it is only because the western powers have created the conditions for them to do so with impunity.

Conclusion: no more Katutura

Whilst it may appear that the Namibian situation is deadlocked because of the Pretoria racists' intransigence, the desire of SWAPO and the people to destroy white domination, no matter its black masks in the DTA, remains unconquerable. If there is one thing which the Zimbabwe revolution proved, it is that "internal settlements" will neither confuse the people nor deter them from the goal of genuine liberation. In the wake of the Turnhalle Conference SWAPO made precisely this point:

"A fire of freedom has been kindled in the eyes of Namibians which the degradation, tanks, guns and violence of Vorster's regime and its allies have not been and will not be able to extinguish. Namibia will one day be free, and it will be the patriotic black nationalists who will achieve it"⁸

Speaking at the International Conference in Solidarity with the struggle of the People of Namibia, held in Paris in September 1980, comrade Sam Nujoma, President of SWAPO, referred to the role of the imperialist powers:

SOUTH AFRICA AND THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

by Peter Mackintosh

With all humanity haunted by the spectre of nuclear war, over 2,000 delegates from 137 countries met in Sofia from September 23 to 27, 1980, at the World Parliament of the Peoples for Peace. It was one of the most diverse, broad and representative gatherings ever held on what is undoubtedly the most vital issue facing mankind today – war or peace – yet not a word about the conference appeared in the great majority of the bourgeois media throughout the world. At a time when the engines of imperialism are working overtime to condition the people for nuclear war, those who work for peace are denounced as the agents or dupes of communism. Patriots are exhorted, not to prevent nuclear war, but to spend their money on building air raid shelters. Naturally, in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, only the rich are entitled to survive. The poor, who have no shelters, are told to crouch under the kitchen table and, when the raid is over, take a shower!

The overwhelming majority of the participants in the Sofia Peace Parliament, drawn from a wide variety of political, trade union, religious, cultural and social organisations, clearly identified the imperialist powers

as responsible for the drive to war and the crippling burdens of the arms race. The Charter adopted by the Peace Parliament said:

"To live in peace is the sacred and inalienable right of each person and each people . . . The exercise of social, economic and political rights is possible only with the ensurance of man's right to peace, the right to life. . .

"The peoples demand a lasting and just peace which will ensure for them the full right to choose their own way of development and to establish a socio-political system in accordance with their wishes. The policy aimed at depriving the peoples of this right is the imperialist policy."

The conference also denounced the racist regime of South Africa, Zionist Israel and reactionary regimes in Latin America and called upon progressive humanity to increase material and political support for the ANC, SWAPO and the PLO. The Charter said:

"It is essential to prevent the emergence of nuclear weapons in the hands of the racist, dictatorial and other reactionary regimes, to prevent the threat to the independence of the neighbouring states and to universal peace . . . The policy of establishing the progressive regimes in the developing countries is a virtual aggression which is being carried out by means of psychological, economic, political and other means including armed intervention . . . The present exacerbation of the international tension is an obvious relapse to the old imperial policy of world domination. . . .

"The existence of the racist regimes and fascist dictatorships which grossly trample on democracy, elementary rights and freedoms of their peoples is an affront to the conscience of mankind. Militarism and international tension bring about favourable conditions for staging anti-democratic coups and for keeping the fascist juntas and the anti-people dictatorial regimes in power".

Concretely the Parliament demanded:

1. That the SALT 2 treaty be ratified immediately and further negotiations conducted on further limitation of strategic weapons
2. That talks on the limitation of medium-range nuclear weapons be started immediately.
3. That all military alliances, including the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO, be disbanded and all foreign bases wound up
4. That trust between states, trust which in the 1970s had substantially promoted the cause of detente, be restored.

Stating that war is not inevitable, that peace can be preserved and

strengthened, the Parliament called for a mighty international effort to turn back the arms race and prevent the holocaust.

“Let the voice of the peoples for peace sound as never before in mass demonstrations, petitions, appeals to parliaments and governments, in actions on a national and international scale”.

Amongst those who addressed the plenary session of the Parliament, in addition to Todor Zhivkov, general secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party, and Boris Ponomaryev, alternate member of the CPSU Politbureau, were the PLO's Yasser Arafat, SWAPO's Sam Nujoma and the ANC's Oliver Tambo.

The decisions of the Sofia Peace Parliament impose a special responsibility on our South African liberation movement to ensure that the organisations are involved at all levels in the implementation of these decisions, that our people are mobilised, not only for the prosecution of the war of liberation, but at the same time for the struggle for peace. There is no contradiction between the two — they are two sides of the same coin. As the Sofia Parliament pointed out, the drive for war is instigated by the imperialists as a means of holding back the liberation movements and preserving imperialist and racist domination throughout the world. It is only in conditions of peace and detente on the world stage that the best possible opportunities are afforded for the wars of liberation to be brought to a successful conclusion.

It was when detente flourished that victories over imperialism were recorded by the people in Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Nicaragua and elsewhere. It is precisely for this reason that the imperialists have decided to destroy detente and push the world nearer to the nuclear holocaust.

Long History

The South African liberation movement headed by the ANC, of which the SACP is a component part, has a long history of activity in the fight for peace. Both organisations were prominent in the campaigns against fascism and war conducted during the 1930s. When Japan invaded Manchuria, when Italy invaded Abyssinia, when Franco launched the Spanish civil war, and when Hitler threatened in turn Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland, all sections of our movement were alerted to the danger of a second world war.

The Congress movement took the initiative in the formation of the South

African Peace Council in August 1953. Recording its opposition to the use of Africa as a war base, the founding conference, attended by 275 delegates from 3 provinces representing nearly 300,000 people, demanded bread and social benefits, peace and disarmament rather than war. In a key paper to the conference Nelson Mandela, Transvaal President of the ANC, said:

"The people of Africa will be the first victims of a future war. Their industries will produce armaments, their raw materials will be used, not to develop their economies, but to destroy those of others. The war danger in Africa is very close indeed. . .

"This mad lust for profits and markets in Africa, the war preparations of the United States and its satellite countries, puts the national independence of the people of this continent and their very right to live in serious jeopardy. The threat to the national liberation movement in Africa resulting from the presence of foreign armies arouses the deepest indignation of all patriots. The people of Africa are being forced to realise that peace is their most immediate concern. They demand the withdrawal from the continent of Africa of all foreign troops, and the end of colonial oppression and exploitation".

There was some resistance to the peace message from certain sections of our people who thought world wars were fought only in the northern hemisphere, and that in any case, if South Africa was involved, war might be the catalyst leading to the overthrow of the racist regime. ANC leader Walter Sisulu dealt with this misconception in an article in the newspaper *Advance*, successor to the banned *Guardian*, on October 7, 1954:

"Many Africans do not understand why oppressed people should be very much concerned with peace movements. They think, perhaps, that the war preparations are being directed only against far-away countries like Russia and China. They do not realise that these wars are specifically directed against the colonial and semi-colonial countries and, therefore, against the liberatory movement itself".

The bogey of communism, said Sisulu, was used to hide the imperialist intentions of re-enslaving or perpetuating the enslavement of the colonial peoples. He pointed out that it was the imperialists who supplied arms to the fascist Nationalist Government for the purpose of crushing the liberation movement. The fight for peace was part of the fight for liberation.

The anti-communist flag was hoisted again by the racist regime in 1956, when the Nationalists closed down the Soviet consulates in South Africa. A

joint protest statement issued by the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, the South African Coloured People's Organisation and the Congress of Democrats said it was clear the Government was committing the country to military blocs not to "defend" South Africa ("no one wants to attack us") but to help the European powers to retain their hold over the people of Africa by putting down their movements for national freedom from colonialism. The President of the ANC, Chief Lutuli, said the allegation that the Soviet consulates had been responsible for "subversive" activities amongst blacks was sheer propaganda. He added:

"The ANC urges the Government to reverse its action in the interests of peace and healthy relations among nations The freedom and peace-loving people of our land must demonstrate to the world that, beyond any doubt, they stand with all freedom and peace-loving people in the world such as the people of the USSR".

1956 was the year of the counter-revolutionary uprising in Hungary and the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Suez in a bid to put down the Nasser regime for nationalising the Suez Canal. In the newspaper *New Age*, successor to the banned *Guardian* and *Advance*, Communist party general secretary Moses Kotane pointed out that while the racist students of Stellenbosch university, not hitherto noted for their support of progressive causes, had marched through the streets in support of the Hungarian fascists, the response of the liberation movement to the invasion of Suez had been muted. Calling for more militant action by the people against the imperialists, Kotane said that at a time when western leaders were trying to embroil the world in war, it was only the people who had and must use their collective power to stop them.

Role of Anti-Communism

The clear recognition that anti-communism was the main weapon of imperialism kept our liberation movement on a consistent path through a succession of international crises. The various components of the Congress Movement registered protests against the American invasion of the Lebanon in 1958, France's explosion of an atom bomb in Algeria in 1960, the US threat to plunge the world into war over the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 (demonstrators carried placards reading "Long Live Castro, Cuba Yes, Yankee No"), the US aggression in Korea and Vietnam.

Today the imperialists are intensifying their preparations for war against the Soviet Union, the motherland of socialism and the main ally of liberation

movements everywhere, in a bid to recover the ground they have lost during the past decades, to preserve the decaying capitalist system from further degeneration and total collapse. In their frantic attempt to encircle the Soviet Union, they secretly arm racist South Africa and equip the Botha regime with the materials and know-how to manufacture nuclear weapons. And they forge an alliance with the hegemonist regime in China, which in its blind anti-Sovietism has thrown the principles of proletarian internationalism to the winds.

The imperialists claim it is Soviet "expansionism" which threatens world peace. But the facts are that it is the imperialists who have surrounded the Soviet Union with a network of 2,500 military bases and other military installations, while the Soviet Union has no bases anywhere near the USA. Even Cuba, which the US denounces as a Soviet satellite, has the huge US military base of Guantanamo situated on its southern coast — a heritage from the overthrown Batista regime which the US refuses to relinquish, just as the British refuse to get out of Gibraltar. There are half a million American servicemen outside the borders of the US — in 114 countries, including 325,000 in Europe and 132,000 in the Far East and the Pacific area. Large US fleets armed with nuclear weapons sail the seven seas as though they owned them. There are 12,000 nuclear weapons outside the borders of the US, over 7,000 of them in Europe alone. The US military budget, which was only 12,000 million dollars in 1948, has swollen to 171,500 million dollars for the fiscal year which started on October 1, 1980, and the US government and its allies are all demanding that defence allocations be substantially increased in the coming period. The US forges military alliances and links with Egypt, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, China and other countries directed, not only against so-called Soviet "expansionism", but also against any movement to overthrow the reactionary regimes it props up in these dependent territories. The vicious regime in Thailand, where children are bought and sold for profit, is armed to the teeth by the US as a bastion of "freedom" against alleged Vietnamese aggression. The ASEAN countries, hangers-on of imperialism, demand UN-supervised elections in Kampuchea, but are silent about the bloody Zia regime in Pakistan which came to power and continues to rule by force. The US, which would go off its head if the Soviet Navy were to sail into the Gulf of Mexico, parades up and down the Persian Gulf because its "vital interests" are involved — the oil of the Middle East, which benefits not the people of the area, but a handful of sheikhs and the US-dominated transnational corporations. The western powers continue to loot the mineral wealth of Namibia in defiance of repeated UN resolutions.

Global Confrontation

The confrontation we witness on a global scale today is not between "two super-powers", as some like to describe it, but between the forces of imperialism and anti-imperialism, between the forces of reaction and those of social progress as world capitalism fights its last-ditch battles to hold back the era of socialism. The imperialists are indeed powerful, but it is out of desperation, not confidence, that they have resolved to resort to war to defend the evil system of private profit which has now exhausted itself, leaving a trail of recessions, ruined companies and mass unemployment in its wake, an ever-widening gap between the haves and the have-nots.

During the period of detente an uneasy peace was preserved based on the understanding by both east and west that nuclear war was unacceptable since both sides would be destroyed. The danger to world peace which has now developed flows from the US belief that it is now so strong, its weapons so superior, that it can win a first-strike nuclear war. On July 25 last year President Carter (without even consulting his Secretary of State Muskie) signed the Directive 59 which is based on the notion that nuclear war can be limited, and that in a limited nuclear war the US would come out on top. As a result the US is today openly preparing the world for a pre-emptive first strike. In this strategy the US enjoys the whole-hearted support of the megalithic Maggie Thatcher, though other European powers who have experienced more of the devastation of war are not so enthusiastic.

The fact is that the notion of a limited nuclear war is a myth. Recently the United States Senate requested the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) of the US Congress to evaluate four options of nuclear conflict between the US and the Soviet Union. The results were presented in a book *The Effects of Nuclear War* published by the OTA last year. The first case considered was that of detonating a single nuclear weapon over Detroit and Leningrad respectively (both having metropolitan populations of about 4.3 million). The OTA estimates this would cause 1.84 million deaths and 1.36 million other casualties in Detroit and 2.46 million deaths and 1.1 million other casualties in Leningrad. We do not need to waste time on the other in between scenarios. The final case considered was that of an attack involving several thousand warheads against strategic, military and urban-industrial centres. In the absence of civil defence measures, US fatalities could total between 155 and 165 million, with another 33 million injured, while Soviet fatalities might reach between 50 and 100 million. If the bombs were targeted on civilian as well as military targets with no holds barred an additional 20 to 30 million on each side would be killed.

A review of the book in the September/October 1980 issue of *Survival*, the journal of the International Institute of Strategic Studies, concludes:

"Damage and deaths caused by fires ignited by blasts, deaths due to economic and political disintegration or ecological collapse, and somatic effects (such as cancers) and genetic effects are *impossible* to calculate with any certitude.

"The effects of any nuclear operation are therefore essentially unpredictable — except that they will generally be greater than the figures cited here would suggest. And all the limited and selective options that have now been incorporated in the SIOP (Single Integrated Operational Plan) notwithstanding, the possibility of conducting limited and controlled nuclear exchanges in which damage is a matter of policy choice remains no less unreal than it was before the re-thinking of the mid-1970s."

No Cure

What this means for the common people everywhere has been summed up by Helen Caldicott, a US medical doctor who has given up her practice to campaign for nuclear disarmament because she doesn't see any point in curing people who are going to be blotted out anyway if a nuclear war breaks out. In a press interview last October she pointed out that the US joint chiefs of staff have estimated that the chances of a nuclear war breaking out by 1985 are 50/50. Civil defence measures she dismisses as ludicrous.

"The privileged are going to get fried in their shelters just as much as the under-privileged. They'll be asphyxiated, the fire-storms will use up all the oxygen and they'll die. At a New York conference two weeks ago it was said that in 30 days after nuclear war 90 per cent of Americans will be dead. That would apply to the whole of the Northern hemisphere".

Don't let us think we are safe because we live south of the equator. Dr Caldicott added:

"Those that survive won't survive for long. They'll die of starvation, epidemics of disease, acute radiation illness or they'll be burnt and blinded by the sun because the ozone layer will be destroyed. Probably all mammals will be killed". (*Morning Star*, October 21, 1980).

The militarist madmen of the Pentagon and Pretoria who are today attempting to dominate the world by nuclear blackmail must be halted in their tracks before they have brought mankind to the point of no return and we are all incinerated in the holocaust. As the Sofia Peace Parliament declared.

"Only our common struggle can frustrate the criminal conspiracy

against the cause of peace. There is no other way".

We in South Africa have a special responsibility towards the people of our continent, for Premier Botha now also has a nuclear button to press, and his guns and missiles are directed against all independent Africa. It is our task, the task of the liberation movement to make the fight for peace one of its top priorities and ensure that the racist regime is overthrown before it drags us all to destruction.



WHY I JOINED THE COMMUNIST PARTY

by Tau ya Mogale

When one thinks of the socio-economic factors which are the basis of the humiliation of the majority of our people by a tiny section of the power-hungry, wealth-greedy and inhuman minority, and the influence this had on one member of our trouble-torn society, the vast spectrum of events and experiences may come to overshadow somehow those which are in reality most crucial in one's lifespan.

It is true that an individual cannot develop and mature outside society. My life in apartheid South Africa is not unique. It is typical of the lives of the downtrodden majority, of the landless, yet at the same time proud and rebellious South African people. Yet in explaining "Why I joined the Communist Party" I will have to show what happened in my life to elevate me from an ordinary student into a Communist. Naturally, most of the events of my life will be interrelated and common to the lives of my oppressed people.

Twenty years ago, having failed to find work in Johannesburg, my mother found herself as a domestic worker in Germiston, where she gave birth to me. It had become a tradition of some sort in her family to depart

to Jo'burg and return with children, only to part with them on arrival at my granny's house in the countryside. This perpetual march to and from the Golden City seemed congenital, despite all the difficulties involved.

For three years I stayed with my granny, herself a "Coloured" in the eyes of South Africa's mad laws, born of a travelling Scotsman and an African woman five years after the imperialist Anglo-Boer War (1902). She was now a mother to all of us and we survived on her pension and some profit she made from homebrew. Workers from a nearby town used to come and relieve their sorrows on mtompotsi, hops, "tse ditona" (the big ones) brewed by my granny all by herself.

The first line of demarcation isolating me from my cousins, some of whom were classified as "Coloured", came at the schoolgoing age of seven years. We used all to walk off in the same direction, only to separate when they reached their school not far from home, while I had to continue on foot for a few kilometres more.

Mine was a school only in name, a parade of naked walls, overpopulated by keen students and frustrated teachers who vomited abuse right, left and centre and wielded a whip to land on the back of anyone making the slightest noise. My cousin's school was nicely built and decorated, with maps, pictures and some works of art done by students themselves hanging on the walls.

Located just in front of our village was a big college for white students, a real paradise on earth compared to my school.

I remember being undermarked in Standard 3 at a higher primary school for having described my school as ugly when writing a composition on "my school". In later years I was to regard with pity this submissiveness of my teacher in the face of the institutionalised inferiority of the Africans.

Forced Removal

At this juncture we were removed from the old location to a new one. The government uprooted our community from an area we had occupied for a long time, an area where cattle could graze freely and where people could live off the soil. The reason given was that the community would have easy access to the water system etc. etc. But in my opinion there were two reasons for the move: firstly, to force the community to abandon its ownership of cattle and fowls, and secondly to compel them to pay rent for the little houses in which vast families were supposed to live.

There was great dissatisfaction in the community, but owing to the effective use of bulldozers the population was forced into submission

Those who offered resistance were terrorised by bulldozers driving through their houses, destroying furniture and everything that was left in them. It was a terrible experience to see old people weeping, their tears dripping on the soil, a soil rightfully theirs. Years later one could still meet some of them standing on the ruins where their houses used to be, shaking their heads slowly in disbelief.

Religion also had an impact on my life. At the location from which we were moved there was a deep respect for a certain Father Hooper. Rumour had it that, although a white man, he had dared to oppose the government in its services to the people. But even at that stage it was not clear to me what service the government was supposed to be rendering to the people.

This was also a time when the Bantustan circus was beginning to show its tickies, Mangope, Buthelezi, Matanzima, Mphephu etc. We once surrounded Mangope in town after he had been turned down when he asked a Greek shopkeeper to order a "servant" (black man) to take his groceries to his car. The shopkeeper was fed up and ordered him to get out of the shop immediately.

A few months later Bishop Lekganyane on his way to Botswana had to pass through the same town, also driving a Mercedes, and the whole town stood in honour for him. One must add that the idealistic effect of religion on our people is not necessarily a sign of submission to the status quo. Religion essentially provides a forum where the emotional scars inflicted by racist capitalism can be soothed. The church, it seems, has become more powerful since the people's organisations were banned.

Radio Propaganda

The continuous broadcasts over Radio Bantu warning us against "approaching fleets from Russia", "Soviet threats to the Republic" and the vulgarisation of communism instilled in all of us an interest in what communism means. Being a curious student I was struck by the difference between what they broadcast and the definition of communism contained even in their own dictionaries. At least I was able to realise that communism was not synonymous with oppression.

All these experiences reached their culminating point when I continued my secondary education in Soweto. I would rather have gone to a boarding school, but money — or the lack of it — frustrated me. Tentatively I had to start my Form 1 in Soweto. I was surprised by the low standard of living there, contrasting it with all those castles I had built in my mind of "Igoli". In retrospect, I am glad I went to Soweto. Here at least one could read a

newspaper every day and mix with nearly everybody as an African.

Here I also had an opportunity to look at the root cause of my "parentlessness". I found them living in this match-box. My father, I was to learn later, had been a regular prisoner in nearly all the prisons in the locality. My mother's passbook, even after 18 years in Jo'burg, was not "in order". For the first time I was exposed to poorer conditions than those I had been used to. My father, a steel and metal worker for the past 16 years, got something like R26 a week and was supposed to pay rent and to look after a family of 7 members. I could understand why three children coming after me had to leave school and go to work. How far I personally could go my mother was not sure. I grew worried and very concerned with this state of poverty and hunger.

I made friends with students in higher classes. After the murder by book bomb of Onkgopotse Tiro after he had fled to Botswana, student politics began to ferment. I found myself involved in youth clubs, debates, theatre, Student Christian Movement and later the Soweto Students' Representative Council (SSRC). Liberation ideas became my main interest, and we developed a great distaste for Bantu Education.

The wasteful, idiotic exercise of Bantustanisation by the government became one of the objects of intense contempt and condemnation in our circles. The drums of the victorious struggle in Mozambique and later of Angola reached our ears. The hope and dream eulogised by Martin Luther King whom I used to idolise had to be transformed into reality.

Enforced Afrikaans

When the issue of Afrikaans became the new strategy of the regime against the people in 1976, the students, already discontented with the whole system, seized the moment to use it as a weapon for liberation. I don't intend to retrace the Soweto events. Briefly, for me this was the moment of no return, of no surrender.

Those who remain to tell the story had to do more than that. They had to reappraise and reassess the victories scored at the time, and the causes of the defeats. Driven out of our country, we others are preparing to go back and seize what is ours, continuing the same struggle. Every struggle has its defeats from which revolutionaries have to learn. Soweto was not rehearsed in a laboratory or a classroom. More importantly, it was led by people with little knowledge of politics, strategy and tactics, let alone the history of our people.

After an intensive political and ideological training based on the

liberating science of Marxism-Leninism, we could analyse our efforts, put our first baptism into active politics in Soweto and elsewhere into the correct perspective. Those who fell, in our view, fell for the same principles that we are now poised to translate into action. I had this wonderful opportunity to learn about the higher and nobler ideas of communism and came to dedicate myself to their fruition.

To have been accepted into the ranks of the glorious South African Communist Party therefore imposes on me two tasks. Firstly I have to erase the blood of those who fell in pursuit of noble ideas throughout our long history of struggle — erase it with blood. Secondly, together with my countrymen, democrats and communists internationally, I have to make sure that the flow of blood that continues to drip on the soil of my land and in far lands where humanity still faces inhumanity from a few monopolists has to be stopped. In its place the red flag of communism must be raised.

Therefore a party of the calibre of the SACP will remain an inspirer, guardian, teacher and leader of my life towards final victory.



CRISIS IN SENEGAL COMING TO A HEAD

*Interview with comrade SEYDOU
SISSOKO, General Secretary of the
African Independence Party of Senegal*

I'm going to try, in the course of this interview, to give an account of the action of our party since its creation in 1957; an idea of the stages we have gone through during this evolution; a very general view of some aspects of the political situation in Senegal, and the positions of our party on the international scene and in relation to the international communist movement.

Our party was formed in 1957, when French colonialism was being transformed into neo-colonialism in the French West African territories. At that time Senegal was one of the colonies with a relatively well-developed working class. The manifesto of the party was launched by a group of intellectuals and workers in Thies, a railway workers' town where the trade unions played a big part in the history of the labour movement, in Senegal in particular and in the African labour movement in general. The party was the first Marxist-Leninist party in West Africa, and was thus

the first party to adopt the words "independence" and "socialism" as slogans. I should add that at the time the slogan "independence" was already being used at the level of youth organisations, but it had no political expression then, and our party was the first to formulate it in political terms, and link it to our slogan of "socialism" in the major basic revolutionary programme.

Initially, the party was implanted in the major working class cities such as Dakar and Thies. As the French Federations of West Africa and Central Africa still existed at that time, the party in the course of its development had branches in the ex-French Soudan (now Mali), in Guinea (Conakry) before independence, in the present Congo (Brazzaville) and Upper Chad. We even had branches amongst the African students in France and in the socialist countries.

Recruiting priorities were in the direction of the working class, but the social structure of our country affected our party's recruitment campaign. Although Senegal is a country where the working class is relatively developed compared with, say, other parts of Africa, it remains essentially agrarian and petty-bourgeois, and this is reflected in the overall composition of the population and also in the composition of the party. The middle strata are numerically greater, and this is why party recruitment, at least in the first stages, acknowledged a specific place for the quite large numbers of petty-bourgeois within the party membership. This subsequently became reflected in the composition of party organs. Doubtless this was a mistake, and we must count it as a factor in the various situations which arose, and which was the cause of a certain number of internal crises which the party has been through, and has now overcome, happily.

Despite everything, the party managed to establish a certain number of bases within the working class and had a role in the mass mobilization for independence, especially in the battle for the "NO" vote in the referendum of 1958.

During the fifties the independence problem became acute. Events succeeded each other rapidly, and the circumstances in which the party found itself leading the movement caused it to put far more emphasis on problems of political agitation than on those of organisation. We were not able to give the problems of education and organisation the attention they deserved, and this was something else which came to have repercussion on the internal life of the party.

Political Crises

The party has come through a number of internal crises: left-wing deviations such as that in 1961, or right-wing such as that in 1963. The most serious which the party had to weather was that of 1964/65, a crisis which had several causes, among others the nature of recruitment, which I referred to just now. Nonetheless, causes of this crisis were the political errors of an ethical and social character committed by the ex-secretary general of the party Mahjmout Diop and notably the line he wished to impose on the party to bring it into the government party. He thought that this was the way to overcome the problem of unity. In the colonial situation of Senegal, where imperialism constitutes a major obstacle, he thought that the way to overcome this was not to develop and exist as an independent party of the working class, but to enter the framework which is tolerated by imperialism and attempt to reverse the situation from the inside.

Thus, he reasoned, we must find a mask. We can no longer operate under a Marxist-Leninist label as such, because imperialism will never permit such a party to lead a revolution. In consequence of this we must find a cover for the true nature of the party. Translated into political terms this was nothing less than a liquidationist tendency, which would have destroyed the rather intangible independence of the Marxist-Leninist party. This independence must be preserved no matter what the situation, no matter what alliances may be contracted, and no matter what the circumstances, in order to maintain the forms of presence and of permanence of the party. The divergences were quite deep, without taking into account that they concealed other aspects of an ethical nature, which had repercussions in a society like ours.

This crisis came at a time when our party was being struck by the severest repression it had ever known. It was a severe crisis, which rocked the party to the very bottom, and which, moreover, nearly proved fatal. Thanks to the devotion of party militants, thanks to the political and ideological level the party had attained, thanks to the experience gained in coming through previous crises, this one, too, was weathered.

An extraordinary rectificatory conference took place which took steps against the errors committed by the secretary general, installed a provisional central committee and which readied itself to draw upon the experience of party struggles from 1957 and to prepare the way for the second party congress to take place, which it did in 1972, and which re-affirmed the fundamental lines of the party orientation which the ex-

secretary general had wanted to liquidate. It also reaffirmed the programme of the party, its Marxist Leninist nature, analysed the errors it had committed, and it is along these lines that the party has continued, above all during these last years when development has been at its height.

The party has also made other mistakes — when, for example, we added the question of political agitation to political organisation and organisation in general. Certain errors have cost us dearly, as when faced with a situation which we did not analyse correctly, we threw all our strength into the struggle, subsequently giving rise to completely unexpected situations which we were not prepared for. For example, in July 1960, during communal and regional elections, the party threw itself into the struggle in such a fashion that its banning ensued, a mere three years after its inception. Since then, the party has survived a long period underground.

We also made other mistakes because we didn't know how to analyse correctly divergencies within the national bourgeoisie. Once in 1960, during the period of the Mali Federation when Senegal was associated with the ex-Soudan, the Federation of Mali being one of the first experiences of political grouping after the party's independence, we didn't see the contradictions which arose between the Mali faction, which had aspirations towards economic independence and was a progressive, nationalist faction, and the Senegalese faction led by Senghor, which was a pro-neo-colonialist faction. We didn't know how to recognize this distinction and we thought that these differences were only a sort of family quarrel. The result, at the same time, coincidentally, at which we had invested our total strength in the regional and cantonal elections I just mentioned, the Federation split. A situation of far greater political significance than that of the cantonal elections arose, for which we were not prepared, and consequently we didn't know how to cope.

A second error, of the same type — underestimating divergencies within the bourgeois groups in power — came about in 1972 when splits occurred between the Senghor faction, representing the neo-colonialists, and Mamadou Dia, an ex-prime minister who represented a national consciousness faction, and who as head of government had taken certain measures at the economic level which had started eating into the positions held by the foreign monopolies, but who, at the same time, had repressed to a certain extent the people and the workers. We didn't know how to tell the difference between these two factions so that we might support that which was the more progressive, and there also we became bogged down.

The factions caused a schism, political suppression came about in Senegal, and this had quite particular characteristics which we could have exploited far better had we been prepared and expecting it.

We made other mistakes because sometimes we were drawn to forms of struggle which were not appropriate to the conditions at the time, such as in 1964 and 1967 when the forms of struggle included armed struggle which did not correspond to the situation at the time. It is, in fact, out of all of this that we drew on the lessons of experience for the second congress.

Essential Points

Let me make note of and distinguish some essential points:

- 1) We needed to construct a real workers' party, taking into account the specific conditions of Senegal, wherein the dominant weight would be that of the working class, but where the party could also recruit from among the toiling sector of the petty-bourgeoisie, since that is the typical structure of our country.
- 2) At the same time the moment had arrived to create a mass-movement party, that is to say to align it with the peasantry, the revolutionary intellectuals and the grass-roots elements within the working class. That was the second lesson we learned.
- 3) The third lesson we learned was that the party had to reinforce its links with the international communist movement. Our limited experience has taught us that this represents a considerable support strength for our party, and that is certainly the case for all communist parties everywhere. The international communist movement is the most influential political movement of our time, on a world scale, and consequently constitutes, for each party taken in its national framework, an essential link on the international level. We therefore had to reinforce as much as possible our links with all the other communist parties on the basis of our Marxist-Leninist principles and the international proletariat.

These three directions of our work, these three central principles are also the three directions in which the party has gone since 1972, the date of our 2nd party congress. During the latter period, from the second congress until the present, and especially since 1975, the party has developed considerably. I should also emphasise that during the period underground, in spite of all the difficulties we went through, in spite of all the repression, the party continued to expand underground, to the extent that on various occasions the government was obliged to make reference to the activity of the party during a period in which it pretended it didn't exist.

It was precisely this activity which brought about a new situation in 1975, more or less permitting a return to normality, and enabling the party to re-establish itself, and since that date the party has perfected its working methods, has gained a foothold within the working class, has reinforced its links with the trade unions, and at the present time, taking advantage of the new situation, has created legal organisations. That, in brief, is an account of the state of the party.

To continue, let me give an account of the state of affairs at present which makes it possible to understand better the legal status currently enjoyed by the party.

In 1975 the experiment of a one-party system, instituted in 1960, collapsed. Through the one-party system Senghor's government had failed to create the political vacuum on which he had been counting in order to give full rein to his neo-colonialist policies. In spite of the banning of our party and of other opposition parties and opposition trade unions, the working class, instead of laying down its arms, continued to fight for its demands. The party had continued to grow, and in various ways the opposition had continued to oppose. So the government was obliged to go back on its doctrine of a one-party system, particularly since at the time the government party was about to join the Socialist International, and one of the membership conditions of the Socialist International is precisely that the would-be member carry out in its own country certain forms of democratization of political life.

All of this combined to make the government re-fashion the constitution in order to allow for the existence of three political factions in Senegal which were: (1) a socialist faction, which it awarded to its own party; (2) a liberal faction, which it awarded to an ex-member of its own party, Abdoulaye Wade, who had left the government party and created an opposition party; and (3) a Marxist-Leninist faction (they called it that) which should normally have been awarded to our party, since our party has been the recognized Marxist-Leninist party for some time in Senegal. Instead, it ended up going to Mahjmout Diop, the ex-secretary general who had been excluded from the party and who for years had had absolutely no connection with it.

Thus it is that today we have a situation where the Government, instead of recognising our party as the constitutional Marxist-Leninist faction, something we had asked for previously, has instead recognised the group of Mahjmout Diop. Thus we have an artificial multi-party system, arbitrarily limited, where the constitutional parties only serve as democratic alibis,

but where the significant political movements within the country go unrecognized. And it is in this situation that our party has to keep going, which we do by trying to make the most use of all the legal and semi-legal means available to us, and particularly by extending our recruiting base and reinforcing our links with the masses in order to force our return to legal status. These are the political conditions and circumstances under which our party exists.

Present Situation

This brings me to the general political situation in Senegal. For the past 20 years a general crisis has been brewing: economic, political, social, cultural, legal, all at once. This crisis has become so serious that today its consequences have affected the whole of the working strata in the country, with the exception of the international minority who are in power. The crisis is deepening as a consequence of the world crisis of capitalism. We can distinguish three main features of this crisis.

1) The continual worsening of the objective living conditions of the masses.

2) The impossibility for the government of governing by the old methods. This is to such an extent that it is obliged to manoeuvre with the limited party system of which we have just spoken. That is the second characteristic. Within this, furthermore, is the fact that the means of government, the pathways of power, are narrowing further and further. There are debilitating financial difficulties . . . but I shall come back to that.

3) The third characteristic of the crisis is the growth of mass resistance to the policy of power. We shall not lose sight of these three aspects when considering the situation as a whole. We shall not lose sight of our Leninist conception of the crisis which is not just to create the objective conditions (of change) but also to link subjective and objective conditions together. And this emphasises the party's policy on unity. The party must do everything it can to bring about the largest possible co-operation in all sectors of all elements that are interested, to no matter what degree, in democratic changes.

A few thoughts on the difficulties of the government: firstly, finance: the budgets, the four-year plans. The Senegalese four-year plans are "re-adjusted" every second year, in order to take into account the economic situation in the capitalist countries. But these re-adjustments are always downwards as the sources of finance are not guaranteed.

The second difficulty is the chronic food shortage in the country, which is moreover a reflection of the chronic budgetary deficit of the country, and this is shown up in all the international food aid contributed in recent years to Senegal. Another difficulty is the actual financing of the budgets. The economic situation is catastrophic.

Certain facts demonstrate this. The external debt of the country is increasing, and, a new factor, the structure of the debt itself is changing. At the moment the short-term repayments are playing a greater part in the debt than the long-term repayments. The situation of the workers has deteriorated, and this is why the social struggles are intensifying. On the political level, I have already mentioned that the important political movements within the country are not recognized. So we have a situation where those in power can no longer go on as before. They are obliged to manoeuvre because their social base is growing smaller. Even the forces which have traditionally upheld them are withdrawing to some extent at the moment. However, the opposition has not yet managed to unite itself. Our policy continues to be one of the widest possible unity for the largest possible alliance of democratic and patriotic forces in the country.

As far as the problems of international communism are concerned, our party considers that the international communist movement is a very valuable force, and to be treasured. The party tries to do its very best to participate in the strengthening of the international communist movement. We support all the positions of international communism — it is the basis of Marxism-Leninism and the international proletariat.

On the question of world issues, we consider that the problem of peace is a key one in the present world, and that it underlies all the others. In consequence, our party thinks that peaceful co-existence between societies and states with different orientations and social systems is a fundamental line which must govern international relations. Peaceful co-existence does not mean collaboration between the two systems, but rather a co-existence within a struggle. Thus peaceful co-existence can be a form of struggle and should not be taken away from its class basis. Our party is aware that the Soviet Union and the socialist countries constitute an essential part of the three forces in the world revolutionary process. On the level of peacekeeping tasks they have assumed important responsibilities which we support and which are working in the same direction as the actions of all the forces of peace in the world.

On Africa, our party attaches great importance to the orientation of the socialist states which have appeared in recent years. For us these

AFRICA NOTES & COMMENT

by Vukani Mawethu

Horn of Africa: The Myth of a “Greater Somalia”

On August 6 last year Radio Addis Ababa announced that a fierce clash between Ethiopian forces and Somali troops had taken place following a four-pronged offensive by the Somali troops in the Wadere area of Ogaden. The radio said 14,000 invading Somali troops had been involved in the offensive from May 27 to July 17, of whom 1,326 were killed, 2,092 were wounded and more than 1,000 captured. Amongst the captured – it was said – were eighteen, mostly senior, officers. Heavy artillery, tanks, armoured personnel carriers, jeep-mounted machine guns, mine detectors and long-range anti-aircraft guns were also seized from the Somalis.

A spokesman for the Ethiopian Ministry of Information and National Guidance said renewed Somali provocations posed a serious threat to peace and stability in the region and “Ethiopia’s patience is being strained to the limit by Mogadishu’s increasingly reckless and irresponsible adventure”. He accused international imperialism and Arab reactionary forces of coming to the aid of Mogadishu. This was the third major clash reported last year between troops of the two countries since the end of the Ogaden war two years ago.

Ethiopia Protests

On August 9 Ethiopia sent identical cables to the UN Secretary-General, Dr Kurt Waldheim, the OAU Secretary General, Edeen Kodjo, and the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, Dr Fidel Castro. The Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Colonel Feleke Gedle Georgis, stated that Somalia had used arms supplied by the US, Italy and other countries of NATO:

"The origins of the sophisticated weapons captured from the invading forces clearly demonstrate that the government in Mogadishu is at present in perfect collusion with imperialism, which is openly encouraging and abetting Somalia's expansionist ambitions to advance its own strategic interests in the area."

Somalia's "collusion with imperialism" has resulted in some harsh exchange of words between Ethiopia and Italy which said that it was "arming Mogadishu only to defend itself."

Somalia does not need to defend herself against anybody, argued Addis Ababa, because she has nobody to fear — be it Ethiopia, Kenya or Djibouti. On the contrary, these countries are targets of Mogadishu's expansionist designs. Italy, with a long record of infringement of the sanctity of Ethiopian independence, has again become an accomplice in enemy plots against Ethiopia's national independence, unity and revolution.

While Ethiopia is demanding an explanation from Italy about the use of Italian supplied weapons, Italy — feigning ignorance — is demanding explanations from Mogadishu as to why weapons intended "purely" for defensive purposes had been used in the attacks.

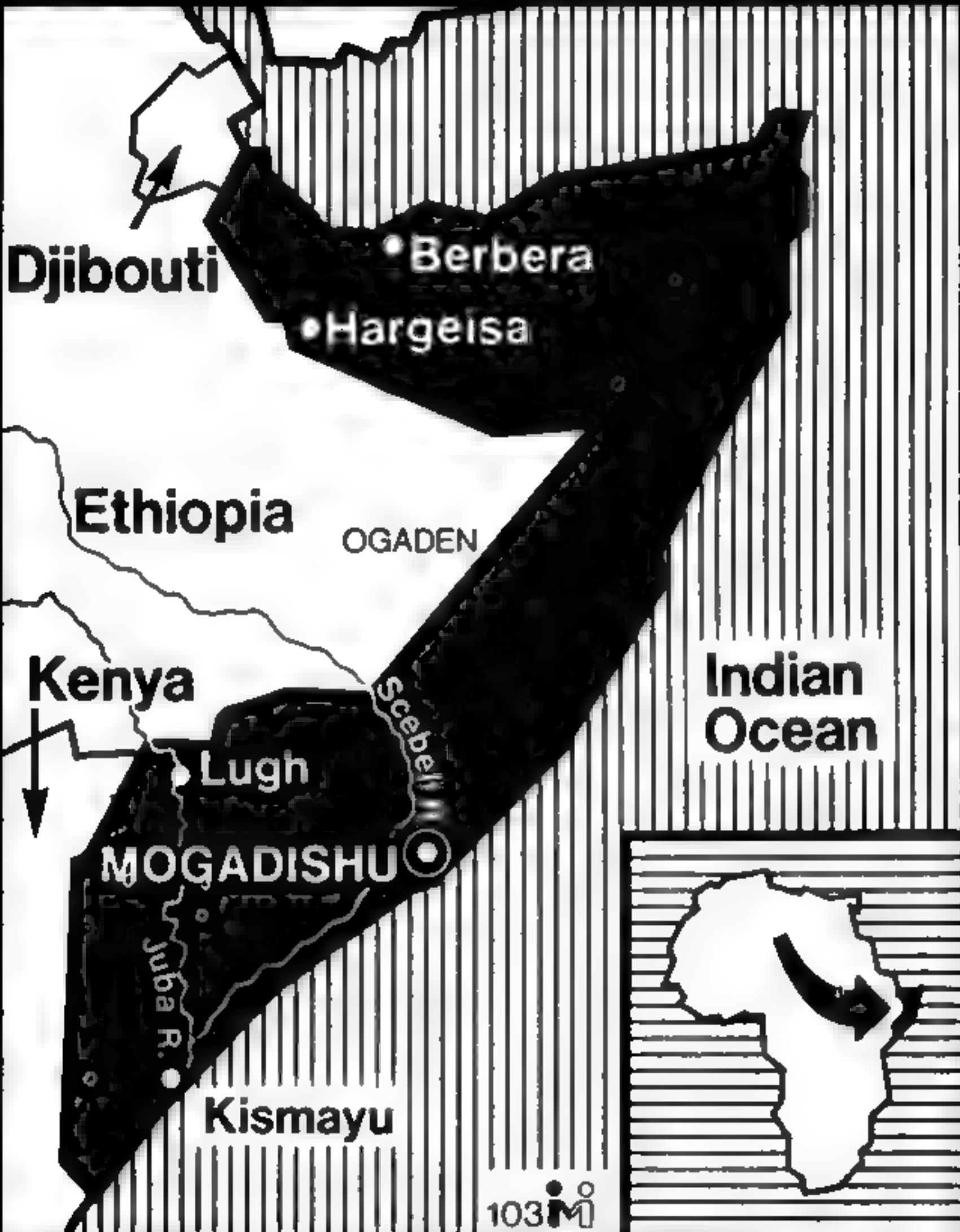
OAU Meets

The OAU commission on the dispute between Somalia and Ethiopia (comprising Nigeria, Tanzania, Senegal, Liberia, Cameroon, Sudan, Mauretania and Lesotho) met in Lagos on August 18 with President Shagari of Nigeria calling for peace.

Speaking for Somalia, the country's Foreign Minister, Dr A.J. Barre, who led the country's delegation to the Lagos talks, justified Somalia's policy in an interview with the *New Nigerian*. He said Somalia, "because of her geographical position, had been unavoidably drawn into a war of liberation between the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) and Ethiopia." Accusing Ethiopia of "colonialism" and comparing it with South Africa — as far as the non-recognition of the right of the colonised to freedom was concerned — he went on to say that Somalia recognises all "liberation movements" whether in Africa or elsewhere — and by

SOMALIA

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implication in parts of Kenya and Djibouti which are claimed by Somalia

Mr Tibabu Bekele, Ethiopia's Foreign Minister, stated clearly that his country's stand on Ogaden was in full compliance with the OAU stand on the question of respect for the territorial integrity of its member states. He maintained that the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) was a renamed wing of Somalia's regular army invading Ethiopia — Somalia's idea of confusing the world. The OAU should censure Somalia for her aggression against Ethiopia, he said, because if the OAU did not do so it would be creating a dangerous precedent.

He stated Ethiopia's four conditions for a negotiated settlement:

- a) Somalia should respect the OAU Charter and cease to infringe on Ethiopia's territorial integrity;
- b) Somalia should abide by the OAU resolution that force should not be used in the settlement of disputes and
- c) in "addition renounce her expansionist policy also aimed at Kenya and Djibouti";
- d) Somalia should compensate Ethiopia for the losses she (Ethiopia) had suffered as a result of the war.

It should be remembered that Ethiopia had partly to give up her literacy campaign and various other projects because of the war. The destruction of the resettlement programme of 80,000 nomads and the disruption of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) research project in the country were some of the consequences of the Ogaden war. Ethiopia had suffered schools and clinics destroyed, lives lost and population displaced.

OAU Decides

The Committee ended its meeting on August 20 after adopting a resolution which the Western press called "strongly pro-Ethiopian". The recommendations included "the recognition, affirmation, implementation and application" of the principle of the inviolability of frontiers of member states as attained at the time of independence. This was an endorsement of the "boundary resolution" passed at the Second OAU Summit in Cairo in 1964 to which Somalia — even then — expressed reservations.

The resolution also strongly opposed any encouragement of "subversion" against the government of another country.

The Committee's resolution, which in effect recognised the Ogaden as an integral part of Ethiopia, was described by the Ethiopian delegate as a "diplomatic victory" for his country, a victory which would isolate Somalia from African and international opinion if the Mogadishu government

persisted in its claims to the Ogaden. This decision which, according to Mr Tibebu, was influenced by documentary proof of the recent Somali incursions into the Wadere region of Ogaden, would need Africa's "collective will" to be implemented.

US enters the scene

Soon after the OAU meeting, on August 22, the US and Somalia finally signed an agreement for the use by US forces of military facilities at the port of Berbera.

The Americans agreed to supply \$20m in general credits this year. The Somalis wanted \$2,000m in various forms of "aid".

This means — in practical politics — that the US has secured the final link in its "rapid intervention" capability in the Indian Ocean and the oil-rich Gulf. The US will "protect" the oil routes from the Gulf and will gain a military foothold on the Horn of Africa. Somalia is the third country after Oman and Kenya to offer the US use of its military installations in exchange for military and economic "aid". This is neo-colonialism in practice.

The Berbera base — 250 kms south east of Djibouti on the Gulf of Aden — is, partly because of its geographical position and the quality of installations, well protected and offers shelter for extremely large ships. Pentagon experts will direct expansion work and repairs to the installations that have not been properly maintained.

The Somalian port of Berbera, the Kenyan port of Mombasa and the Oman island base of Masirah will also provide essential back-up to US air and sea units in the area and to the "rapid intervention force" set up by the Carter administration to "protect" US interests.

In addition one should remember that since November 4, 1979, when the Iranians seized the US Embassy in Teheran, the US fleet consisting of about 30 ships, including two aircraft carriers, has been operating in the Sea of Oman. This fleet has had to be supplied from Subic Bay in the Philippines.

Diego Garcia, a British administered island in the Indian Ocean, where the US already has a naval base, has an important role to play in the schemes of the Pentagon. In July last year, in anticipation of the agreements with Oman, Kenya and Somalia, the Pentagon sent seven freighters to Diego Garcia. The freighters contained heavy equipment for a force of 12,000 Marines. Diego Garcia, which is 3,700 kms from the Gulf, could be used to supply the new bases.

What about Egypt?

These new bases, which include one in Egypt at Ras Banas, are supposed to support US military forces in South West Asia, Africa and the Indian Ocean — and this includes East Asia. The base at Ras Banas — which is supposed to be the biggest — would be a major staging point if the US needed to airlift elements of its "Rapid Deployment Force" into South West Asia. This base could be used for B-52 bombers.

In short the American strategy on the Horn of Africa is simple: Mombasa and Diego Garcia are meant to supply naval forces in the Indian Ocean;

Oman will probably provide two bases: the old British airfield on Masirah island and a port in north Oman ostensibly for possible use by minesweepers;

Berbera would be used for Red Sea operations.

All these countries will provide bases for land-based anti-submarine patrol aircraft; all could receive fighter-bomber squadrons flown from the US; all could accommodate supplies for the aircraft that are now in ships at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

As for Somalia, its role is clear: to serve imperialism's strategic interests; to be used as a crude camouflage for US schemes which coincide with those of the ruling clique in Somalia to actively and consciously contribute to the escalation of the conflict; to defeat and destroy the Ethiopian revolution so as to guarantee the supremacy of the US in the Horn, in North Africa and the Middle East whilst racist South Africa will play the same role in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean.

The price paid by Somalia in terms of debts is high but still higher is the political price.

We would like to warn those who support Somalia or Western Somalian Liberation Front (WSLF) that the dream of "Greater Somalia" might turn out to be a nightmare.

Algeria: the Fate of El Asnam

It is difficult to assess the number of people killed or injured during the earthquake in Algeria last year. Some sources say there were between 5,000 and 20,000 dead and 250,000 casualties. It was estimated that as many as 3 per cent of the country's 19.5 million people were made homeless.

The earthquake hit El Asnam on October 10 at 13.25 p.m. It was at lunch time on a Friday, which is a very busy hour, because Friday is the weekly holiday in Algeria.

El Asnam (the French called it Orleansville) had a population of between 110,000 and 120,000; was the principal inland town on the main road and rail link between Algiers and Oran, and was the centre for a large agricultural region which had a population of some 250,000. It lies in an area near a fault in the earth's crust stretching from Tunisia to Morocco. This was the second time that an earthquake had struck this town in 26 years.

This time the town was almost completely demolished — three quarters destroyed — and half a dozen neighbouring towns were flattened by tremors which caused serious damage for a radius of 60 km. One village had 90 per cent of its houses destroyed and one district, Nasr, was swallowed up completely and its 3,000 inhabitants buried alive. Thousands of people were trapped in the wreckage of their homes. Some areas were completely cut off.

This is an aspect of the scale of the tragedy. What about the survivors? In a country where the extended family is still a powerful force, thousands of families have been affected by this tragedy. All economic activity had to come to a halt in the region — small towns had been practically emptied. There were victims everywhere. These victims had to be housed, fed and nursed; the dead had to be buried, whilst the search for survivors continued. The most urgent problem was how to protect this homeless and deprived population against illness and epidemics.

The reaction of the Algerian government was swift and timely, with the result that many lives were saved. An official seven days of mourning was strictly observed. All cinemas were closed, cafes and restaurants shut early, flags flew at half mast. Celebrations for Eid, the Moslem holiday, were toned down and religious leaders advised people to contribute money to the families of earthquake victims rather than buy sheep for sacrifice.

The army, air force, police and civil defence units joined the rescue workers in the relief operations. Military helicopters flew to the most inaccessible areas and fleets of ambulances and lorries toiled along rough roads, carrying aid and medical teams. 700 foreign doctors helped Algeria's 1,200 doctors.

The government gave priority to tents, blankets and bedding, partly because rains, chilly nights, ice cold winds and snow are a menace in winter. Food, surgical instruments, blood plasma, stretchers, mobile field hospitals, first-aid units and field operating units were needed urgently. There was also the need for tracker dogs to sniff out the people buried under the rubble, water purification plants, disinfectants, cholera vaccinations and sanitation, firemen, civil defence experts and seismologists. Prefabricated housing was provided for thousands of the homeless, and bulldozers and heavy equipment were brought in to clear huge concrete blocks, the remains of fallen buildings.

These were the tasks the Algerian government had to tackle and solve urgently. Without an efficient army, disciplined people and good friends internationally — especially the socialist countries, some of which have considerable experience in coping with such situations — Algeria would not have been able to carry out its tasks successfully. This is all the more noteworthy because Algeria inherited a distorted infrastructure.

The bourgeois ideologists have propounded many "theories" in connection with this disaster. We are told that one of the problems facing Africa — and this includes Algeria — is "population explosion". Since 1962 the population of Algeria has almost doubled. But the problem here is not the question of population growth but the fact that this growth outstrips all efforts to maintain food self-sufficiency and to provide adequate social services. This leads to more imports and dependence on other countries, and has profound effects on housing, education and employment. Even the discussion on whether Algeria should lay more emphasis on capital-intensive industrial development or give priority to agriculture ignores the central question of who benefits from production.

We pose these questions not so much because they are of general theoretical interest, but because they are used to blame the Algerian government for "poor housing" — as if that was the cause of the earthquake. Nothing is said about the fact that the French rebuilt El Asnam exactly on the same site of the 1954 earthquake.

Whatever the cause may be, El Asnam "will live again", but will be rebuilt on a different site, as the Algerian government officials have optimistically stated.

BOOK REVIEWS

PRODUCTION RELATIONS IN TRIBAL SOCIETY

The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry by Colin Bundy. Heineman Books, London, 1979.

In this book, Bundy begins by identifying the major themes in the accounts provided by liberal historians of African economy and society in 19th century South Africa. There are two principal aspects of the work of these historians (MacMillan, De Kiewiet and Marais): the first is their insistence upon 'the "failure" of the African agriculture to provide a living for people who were once herders and farmers . . .' (p. 1); the second is their explanation of this "failure" in terms of a double weakness of African society — its inability to withstand ' . . . the destructive impact of white rule, especially the hammer-blow of sweeping land expropriations and sudden land shortage' and ' . . . the vulnerability and frailty of a primitive tribal economy with unscientific, negligent and technologically backward agricultural techniques, in the face of the imperatives and dynamism of a

more advanced, commercialised market economy.' (p. 1) In short, according to this account, the inherent defects of African society precluded African adaptation to and successful participation in the market economy introduced by the colonial power and the settlers.

As against this, Bundy sets out to argue:

'that there was a substantially more positive response by African peasants to economic changes and market opportunities than is usually indicated; that an adapted form of the prevailing subsistence methods provided hundreds of thousands of Africans with a preferable alternative to wage labour on white colonists' terms in the form of limited participation in the produce market; that a smaller group of black farmers made considerable adaptations, departing entirely from the traditional agricultural economy and competing most effectively with white farmers' (p. 13)

Bundy certainly provides a detailed and convincing account of the competitive market strength of African agricultural commodity producers who emerged in the late 19th century. In this respect his book performs an important service — it undermines the approach which characterises the liberal history in which all African societies are treated as undifferentiated entities which are affected by colonial and settler domination in a simple and one-directional manner: increasing dislocation and impoverishment. Instead, Bundy shows that in the context of colonialism and the market economy, the class structure and economic activities within different African societies altered in a variety of ways. In particular, in addition to producers operating under 'traditional' family-based subsistence agriculture, there emerged commodity producers and, indeed, proletarians.

Bundy's description of changes in the class structure and of the appearance of strongly competitive (African as against white) agricultural commodity producers, must be understood in the light of his conception of 'tribal society' which he characterises as follows:

'Production in tribal society, then, is a domestic function; the family is the productive unit. This does not necessarily imply totally self-sufficient family units, or totally self-contained work units: a family may depend marginally upon exchange for certain occasions. Nevertheless, production within the tribal economy is principally organised by and for the family. It is the family household that organises the growing and sharing of food, its processing and its storage; its members decide how much land to cultivate, and labour for cultivation is drawn from the various members of the family for different purposes. To express this in another way: the division of labour is not *between* families, but *amongst* the members of a family; it is based primarily upon the sexual division in each family'.

If we leave aside some crucial problems in this formulation, we are nevertheless left with the question: how are we to explain the transformations in African society which Bundy has identified? It is here that the central weakness of the book appears.

As against the liberal account which holds that Africans did not *respond* to the market, Bundy argues, and demonstrates, that they did respond and adapt. But why *this* response? Here, Bundy is on the same terrain as the liberal historians. For them, the failure to "respond" was due to weaknesses inherent in African society and the African people; for Bundy, African success on the market demonstrates the vitality of African society and people and their ability to utilise opportunities offered by the market. Both simply accept participation in the market, *commodity production*, as the appropriate, indeed *natural* response. That is to say, for Bundy, as for the liberal historians, the natural response, even for producers operating within non-commodity producing modes of production, is participation in the market.

That this is, indeed, the predominant line of argument in Bundy's book is emphasised by the virtual total absence of any analysis of the specific mechanisms (whether political/ideological or economic) and conditions in which the relationship of merchant capital (with the assistance of the colonial power) to non-commodity modes of production results in the emergence, out of the latter, of agricultural commodity producers. This requires, that is, a precise analysis of the manner in which the relations of production in the "tribal" society become dislocated under the impact of the market and how this leads to "peasantisation". The notion of "response" to the market will simply not do; what has to be shown is how the market penetrates and becomes a force in the transformation of the modes of production and exchange which structure African economies.

In the *Poverty of Philosophy* Marx demolished the attempt to raise commodity relations to the level of an historical natural attribute of man. The guidelines for an explanation of the historical transformation of African social formations in terms of historically specific social processes is to be found in both the theoretical and historical works of classical Marxism — Marx, Lenin, Luxemburg and others — and in the works of contemporary Marxism on the peasantry. It is on this work that an adequate explanation of the historical transformations to which Bundy has drawn attention will have to be based.

A.W.M.

THE LADY IS NOT FOR LEARNING

Which Way is South Africa Going! by Gwendolen M. Carter.
Indiana University Press 1980.

The opening sentence in this book is "Change is in the air in South Africa." What are the main forces that are affecting this 'change' in our country? In interpreting what she calls the "complex, fascinating and disturbing South African situation" the author has set herself the task of "seeing what is most likely to lie ahead of our people."

As far as the immediate future is concerned the author concludes (p 145) that:

1) The Botha government's political, legal and military power provides it with almost unassailable strength, both internally and within Southern Africa

2) Neither the government nor the white population at large has any wish to turn South Africa into an openly armed camp. Such a situation would destroy the attractiveness of the country for many, if not most, of its white members — hence the range of expedients the Botha administration is adopting.

What the author calls "a range of expedients" is in fact a desperate attempt by the racist fascist state to neutralise the growing revolutionary situation in the country, which spells the eventual overthrow of the regime. For Botha's strategy to succeed, the author specifies three conditions that must be satisfied (p 145):

1) The regime must successfully enlist the support of the English and Afrikaans speaking businessmen in the interests of an expanding economy at home and a more favourable image abroad.

2) Co-opt on a class basis an urban black elite with settled housing, satisfying employment opportunities, better school and hospital facilities, the relaxation of restrictions based on colour and some kind of political rights that would influence their own conditions but not challenge those of the whites.

3) Maintain the support of the "homeland" bureaucracies which are reinforced against internal pressures by continued privileges and the accepted exercise of coercive powers.

It has always been wrongly assumed by many Western political analysts that there are deep-seated and fundamentally different political attitudes

between the English and Afrikaans speaking members of the white ruling class in South Africa. But, on the contrary, the white ruling class as a whole, be they English or Afrikaans speaking, agree on the basic and most important issue: that is that the relationship between labour and capital, which assures the continued exploitation of the masses, must be maintained at all costs. Indeed, the differences that have shown themselves since 1976 (Chapter 2) are primarily disagreements on what tactics should be adopted to preserve the status quo. It is perhaps worth noting that the overwhelming victory of the Nationalist Party in the last election could have been achieved only with extensive support from the English speaking areas.

The establishment of a black middle class is an issue that has received much attention. Certainly the regime is making serious attempts to implement such a policy. However, there are certain questions that need to be considered.

- 1) Will the regime remove from the Statute books the numerous laws that restrict mobility and force us to continue being merely "hewers of wood and drawers of water"?
- 2) Will the regime permit this elitist class to grow sufficiently for it to become a significant social force in society?
- 3) Will the regime permit the aspiring black bourgeoisie to compete with its white counterpart?
- 4) Have the political consciousness and aspirations of the oppressed majority reached the point where anything short of total national liberation will not be accepted?
- 5) Will the pressure from the black community as a whole be of such intensity that those who were initially willing to be part of an elite find it preferable to conform to the will of the community?

The author fails to address herself to these questions adequately.

United Front

It is, however, on the question of the mobilisation of the progressive forces into a united front that the book has its greatest weaknesses. Gatsha Buthelezi and his Inkatha movement are given much prominence. The author repeatedly hits us over the head with the fact that Inkatha has between 200,000 and 300,000 fully paid-up members, making it the biggest mass organisation in the country. Perhaps it is necessary to recommend to the author that she investigate fully the number of people

who voluntarily joined Inkatha as opposed to those who had no option but to join. In a letter to the editor (*The African Communist* No. 81), Comrade X from Kwamashu Township in KwaZulu demonstrated how membership of Inkatha is made compulsory. One cannot have any dealings with the civil administration (to get married for example) without being asked to produce one's membership card. As to Inkatha members being "used to discipline and orders" (p 146), to what end is this being used? During the student unrest in April last year, Buthelezi ordered his 'impi's' to beat up schoolchildren who refused to desist from the campaign against inferior Bantu Education.

It is significant that the author looks primarily to groups such as Buthelezi and Inkatha, AZAPO, Black Consciousness Movement of South Africa (that was reconstituted by remnants of the movement abroad) and, most amazingly, to an organisation that to date exists in name only in Nigeria, the South African Youth Revolutionary Council (p 90). The author makes every attempt to deny the existence of the African National Congress as an organised force inside the country. While conceding that the ANC played a leading role in the struggle in the past, she maintains that today it exists merely as an organisation in exile. And yet, can the author or anyone else explain how it is that the vast majority of people in political trials in South Africa are charged with belonging to the banned African National Congress and South African Communist Party? Can anyone deny that the last executives of most of the banned Black Consciousness Organisation, such as SASO and NYO, took the decision to continue the struggle and called upon their members to join the ANC?

In all the 148 pages of this book, no mention is made of the activities and role of the people's liberation army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, in the struggle for liberation.

If the author ignores the main sources of popular resistance, how can she tell us which way South Africa is going?

P.G.

EUROPEAN VIEW OF AFRICAN HISTORY

The Penguin Atlas of African History, by Colin McEvedy.
Penguin Books 1980.

McEvedy's *Atlas of African History* covers the period from 175 million years ago to 1978. It is a succinct account of civilisation in the Continent that gave birth to the human species. The book consists of 59 excellent maps showing kingdoms, trade routes, population data, etc. The text is lucidly written and a clear thread runs through the complex events and interrelationships covering such a vast area and time span.

The great virtue of the book is that in outlining African history from the earliest times, it makes the reader aware of the enormous contribution Africa has made to human civilisation. From sites such as Swartkrans and Olduvai Gorge, *Homo Erectus* — capable of making fire, of producing flint instruments with an elegant symmetrical finish and able to communicate by mouth — spread to other parts of the world about half-a-million years ago. It was in Africa too that the world's first sizeable state was created by King Menes of Upper Egypt around 3000 B.C.

The reader can also find details of other notable achievements and developments in African history: the great Empires of Mali, Ghana, Songhai and Zimbabwe. During the thirteenth century, Mansa Musa of Mali, while on a pilgrimage to Mecca, took so much gold to the Cairo bullion market that the price of the metal fell 20 per cent. At about the same time, the Shona of Great Zimbabwe were also involved with the mining of gold. A series of maps show the spread of Bantu-speaking peoples from West Africa from A.D. 1 and by A.D. 1000 there were permanent settlements in the Eastern Cape, some 600 years before the intrusion of whites into South Africa.

These are the kinds of facts the Atlas helps to show in a concise way and they refute the usual myths held by white racist historians — that Africa was a land of "blank and brutal barbarism" and that South Africa was unpopulated by Bantu speakers when the whites colonised it.

However, despite these positive aspects, McEvedy's Atlas has weaknesses, some of a fundamental nature. First, his conception of history is a bourgeois one. History is seen as arbitrary and spontaneous development rather than the development of human beings as socially organised beings rooted in a material world. Thus, for instance, the impetus for the ending

of slavery is seen to be the philanthropy of people in England (p. 96). Ignored are the changing economic circumstances which made slavery an unviable institution.

Secondly, the Atlas retains a European perspective, especially after the intrusion of whites into Africa. The positive role of blacks in the making of their own history recedes while the role of white settlers and outsiders gains dominance. An example of this Eurocentrism can be seen in his comment on population changes in South Africa:

"In South Africa where, on present trends, the end of the century figures will be 6.5 million whites as against 35 million blacks, with other groups (Coloureds and Asians) amounting to 6 million. This represents a relative fall in the white share from its present 17% to 13.5%. It seems a dangerously low figure for an elite trying to keep all the good things to itself. Nonetheless, if they are there at all, the whites are going to be in power and most people think that, barring outside intervention, they will be. Up to AD 2000 that is" (p. 130)

The task of African historians is to accelerate the researching and writing of their own history, to restore to Africa its former glory and to galvanise for the future its enormous social and economic potential for a united socialist Africa. Meanwhile, texts like McEvedy's must be used with extreme caution. While the Atlas is useful as a guide to key dates, events and movements that shaped the historical process, it contains an unscientific approach and biased interpretation of that process.

M.

IMPERIALIST SUBVERSION IN AFRICA

Dirty Work: The CIA in Africa. Edited by Ellen Ray, W. Schaap, K. van Meter and L. Wolf. Zed Press, London 1980. Price £18.95 hardback, £7.95 paperback.

Botha's 'Total Strategy' is not merely the defensive mobilization of white South Africa in all spheres of life to meet the 'total onslaught'; it is an offensive strategy devised by the racists aimed at undermining and ultimately destroying their chief enemy, the national liberation movement, headed by the ANC. The Information 'defectors' from BOSS (DONS, NIS) have adequately demonstrated the lengths to which the racists are prepared to go to defend and promote their interests. Assisting them in their dirty work has

been that venerable institution of reaction, the CIA.

This book is the second in the *Dirty Work* series, a valuable sequel to the first: *Dirty Work The CIA in Europe*. It reveals not only the links between the CIA and BOSS and the nature of the CIA's private manoeuvres in South Africa but brings together for the first time information revealing the extent and scope of the agency's foul play throughout the continent. US policy on Africa has until recent years been consistently low key, successive administrations preferring to leave to the former colonial masters the overt political, diplomatic and military tasks of keeping African states on the line. Nonetheless, the US has never hesitated to employ its CIA policemen to prevent or suppress any tendencies which would lead to a shrinkage of the "free world". The range of tactics employed by the agency have been highly varied, from fielding armies on a battlefield to overthrow governments, through political assassination to the manipulation of attitudes through the media. Every method of 'covert action' which has been employed elsewhere has also been employed in Africa. However, since the overthrow of the fascist regime in Portugal in 1974, the activities of the agency have multiplied manifold and its chief zone of activity has shifted southwards in step with the advance of the liberation struggles.

Much of the work of the agency has been and is carried out directly, on its own behalf, but most striking is the degree of co-operation and collusion between the CIA and local intelligence/security agencies or pro-imperialist groups in independent African countries. Most well known is the co-operation with the SDECE (French intelligence agency) and its colonial offshoots in Francophone Africa, and PIDE (Portuguese secret police) in the former Portuguese colonies. Convincing details are given of CIA connivance in the assassinations of revolutionary patriots such as Patrice Lumumba, Amilcar Cabral and Eduardo Mondlane, of military support for counter-revolutionary groups such as Holden Roberto's FNLA and Jonas Savimbi's UNITA in Angola, of mercenary recruitment in 'Rhodesia' and of countless other subversive activities.

For those more closely associated with the revolutionary situation in South Africa, of particular interest are the articles dealing with CIA assistance to companies smuggling arms and nuclear technology to South Africa. The South African National Intelligence Service (ex-BOSS, DONS) has long worked hand-in-glove with the CIA. The web of collaboration between the two is mutually beneficial, the NIS providing the CIA with information on 'revolutionaries' and the movement of Soviet shipping around the Cape for instance, while the latter has, amongst other things, assisted in overcoming

the obstacles imposed by the arms embargo.

More than one third of the book (over 230 pages) consists of biographies and lists of more than 700 Americans who have been posted in Africa by the CIA since 1970. All of those named were found to have worked in American embassies, consulates and missions under cover of the State Department. The official job descriptions of these "spooks" are mere covers for CIA agents. Not all the people named are or have been continuously engaged in intelligence work but the value of the list is to make known the histories of these people so that as they move from post to post the intentions of the agency can be determined and revealed.

A valuable book, not because it reveals anything which has not been exposed before, but because it brings together in one volume details of the agency's dirty work on the continent, thus reminding us of the overall power of the interlocking forces opposed to revolutionary advance in Africa.

J.

THE LIMITS OF THE LAW

Justice in South Africa, by John D. Jackson, published by Pelican Books, London.

Mr Jackson's book is the brief professional autobiography of a liberal, criminal lawyer with a large practice among the black population of the Eastern Cape. The most interesting parts of it are his detailed accounts of cases in which he was involved — particularly his defences of young Africans who were prosecuted in their hundreds at the time of the student resistance in Port Elizabeth in the summer of 1977-78. He eventually found himself appearing in the makeshift magistrate's court at Algoa Park police station every day for five months.

Mr Jackson reveals himself as a warm-hearted, pugnacious, self-opinionated, excitable person inclined towards exaggeration. He obviously cared deeply about his black clients and the injustices which they suffer, but his political consciousness has never progressed beyond a general humanitarianism. He worked long hours, brought an essential service to his clients and often took cases free of charge, simply because he cared personally about the outcome.

Though he was able to make a comfortable living out of the South African legal system, his was a way of life full of difficulties and contradictions which, in his case as in so many others, ended in emigration. His involvement in political cases had made him many enemies in his profession. The Law Society launched proceedings against him, alleging contraventions of those professional rules which, being essentially intended for lawyers with a bourgeois clientele, are almost inevitably contravened by those with working-class practices. These proceedings had not yet reached a final conclusion when Mr Jackson, becoming aware that he was under surveillance by the security police, decided to leave South Africa.

The book has its less successful parts. A chapter is devoted to a list of oppressive statutes — a task which has been tackled more accurately, on more than one occasion, elsewhere. Mr Jackson's attempts to draw general conclusions about the South African judicial system are of limited interest and not always consistent from chapter to chapter. His personal experiences, however, constitute a part of the history of popular resistance in the Eastern Cape and he has done the people a service by publishing them.

P.M.

MIXED THOUGHTS ON REVOLUTION

Revolutionary Thought in the 20th Century, edited by Ben Turok, published by Zed Press, London. Price £12.95 hardback, £4.50 paperback.

"This volume", says Turok in his introduction, "arises from my own frustration in trying to put together a university course on revolution and the difficulties of collating a set of primary texts which would convey the depth and sweep of revolutionary writings". With the object of providing students "with basic material produced by the great Marxist revolutionaries of our times", he has produced a selection of writings "by revolutionaries world-wide".

He has divided his book into seven sections: 1. The Proletarian Revolution, to which the only contributors are Marx and Engels (*The Communist Manifesto* whose date is no doubt inadvertently given as 1878

instead of 1848) and Lenin; 2. The National Democratic Revolution, to which the only contributor is Mao Tse Tung; 3. The National Liberation Struggle (contributions from Vietnam's Le Duan, Guine's Cabral, Mozambique's Machel and Cuba's Castro, plus the "Strategy and Tactics of the African National Congress"); 4. Conditions for Armed Struggle, Guerrilla Warfare and People's War (Che Guevara, Debray, Machel and Pomeroy); 5. Revolutionary Violence (Fanon and Le Duan); 6. The Struggle for Socialist Transition under Parliamentary Democracy (Gramsci, Cunhal, Carillo, Althusser and Dimitrov); 7. On Taking and Keeping State Power (Chile's Teitelboim and Vietnam's Giap).

A stimulating collection. However, while useful in bringing to students a variety of texts not previously available to them in so convenient a form, it nevertheless does not provide a balanced picture of revolutionary thought in the 20th Century. Serious omissions are, for example, Lenin and Stalin on the national question, and any of the collective contributions of the Comintern (apart from 4½ pages of disconnected Dimitrov in relation to the 7th Congress in 1935), any of the collective contributions of the communist and workers' parties of the world at their congresses held since the end of World War 2, and (perhaps most surprising of all) any of the thoughts on revolution produced by the Communist Party of his own South Africa, the oldest Communist Party on the African Continent which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year.

One consequence of these "blind spots" is illustrated by the section on the national democratic revolution, where Turok creates the impression that Mao Tse Tung has evolved a new theoretical and practical concept as opposed to Marx and Lenin, who "focussed on the proletariat as the main vehicle of revolution". Had Turok included or discussed in his book the theses on the national question adopted by the 2nd and 6th Comintern conferences, as well as various CPSA and SACP theses, his readers would have been able to appreciate that the concept of the national democratic revolution did not spring newly minted from Mao's brain but had its origin in the work and thought of the Comintern and its constituent parties in the twenties and thirties, and that the "orthodox" communist movement (underrepresented in his selection) has made its full contribution to the development of the concept in the ensuing period.

Z.N.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POLITICAL PREPARATION FOR MILITARY STRUGGLE

From Jersey Jones, somewhere in Africa

In *The African Communist* No. 82, 3rd Quarter 1980 there is an article on "Armed Struggle in S. Africa" by Comrade Mzala.

This is a well-researched article and I found it thought-provoking. But all the same the article has some shortcomings. Amongst other things Mzala over-emphasises armed actions as a means to mobilize the people. In my opinion I felt that in Mzala's article the cornerstone of revolution is neglected, i.e. political mobilisation. We generally make generalisations about it rather than being more concrete and practical.

It is true that in our situation the armed struggle remains the main method for victory. This question was settled long ago and it was dictated to our people and the movement by both objective and subjective factors that were prevalent at that time. In order to underline this the ANC and its allies launched a campaign of sabotage acts which were aimed at:

- 1) Laying a firm foundation for future armed struggle.
- 2) Identifying the enemy.
- 3) Bridging the gap between non-violence and the armed struggle itself.
- 4) Making a break with the past.

b) Controlling violence because we know people were resorting to spontaneous actions.

As indicated in Mzala's article, 150 acts of sabotage were carried out in 18 months and this goes down as a record of M.K. in combat. No doubt there were other achievements whose magnitude cannot be measured by any instrument. There are lots of lessons to be drawn today. So really I feel that before we can implement Mzala's thesis of . . . "vigorous revolutionary action the main content of which must be effective and sustained guerrilla operations including a nation-wide sabotage campaign reminiscent of early sixties", we need to take heed of some of these lessons.

According to Joe Slovo, "in the political sphere, too, distortions crept in . . . the energies and resources devoted to the planning and execution of acts of sabotage and to the military apparatus and all its auxiliary requirements began to affect the pace of political work amongst the people." (*No Middle Road*)

This is a serious question which all honest revolutionaries need to examine. Armed actions in themselves cannot detach the people from the side of the enemy, nor of course bring about mass participation on our side. Experience and practice have taught us that armed actions without a political mass basis are easily frustrated by the enemy. For example in Bolivia in 1966/7 we had Che Guevara who showed heroism and determination and with his guerrilla band carried out armed actions successfully, but the people or peasants in that area were rather hostile to them. Even in Guine Bissau, according to Basil Davidson in *The Liberation of Guine*, page 47, "The PAIGC needed 3 years of active political work in the villages before they could reply to the Portuguese with guerrilla warfare . . ." Even in 1968, 9 years after they began, there were still areas where people would not listen or were afraid to listen.

Take the Zimbabwe situation. For all the years of armed struggle one heard very little of mass participation in terms of all-round participation at nation-wide level apart from support they were giving to guerrillas in the combat zones.

Of course, I am not saying we must adjourn armed actions in S.A. and start stockpiling weapons. That would be ridiculous. I am deliberately emphasising that at the present moment our slogan should be 'Mobilization, Organisation and Education' of our people. I believe with our potentiality we are in a position to hit the enemy anywhere and whenever we like, as has been shown by the daring attacks in Moroka Orlando, Soekmekaar, Sasol etc

What does political mobilisation involve? Whom do we mobilise and for what, against whom? These are questions which need a deep sober analysis of all the political forces in S.A. No doubt we know both our enemy and his allies internally and externally. The political forces constitute mainly the oppressed African majority, but also other oppressed minority groups (Coloureds, Indians) and a section of democratic whites.

The strategy and tactics of the ANC are based on these realities. All fighting forces have to be harmonized in a broad National United Front based on the Freedom Charter. This therefore poses a challenge to us to mobilize those millions in the Bantustans on the basis of their day-to-day problems, it means we have to reach those people in the white farms whom we can't mobilize through armed action but through word of mouth because lots of them are illiterate. I regard this as the most crucial area since peasants are very hard to convince. Even workers in the cities, mines and factories need to be mobilized. We cannot take them for granted, we have to explain to the workers who we are, our own programme, their own role and what tomorrow will bring for them and why.

This therefore suggests an all-round vigorous political preparation of the entire mass of our people. We need political workers i.e. professional revolutionaries, people who are capable of surviving under the present conditions at home. They might be fewer at the beginning, but better. They must be the most active and dedicated organisers who will work on propaganda and agitational work, make posters, work out action and propaganda slogans as dictated by the situation, form political cells, expose enemy manoeuvres, win the hearts and minds of all our people, be able to direct and lead them.

At the beginning the pace might be slow but this will need to be sustained and perfected. This may take a long time and it is the most difficult period, but without it, in the words of Cabral, "nothing of value can be done". A revolution is an act of creation. It is the work of millions of the people, young and old, against the most unpopular regime which has a huge apparatus of reactionary violence at its command. This strength of the enemy is transient, because each day people get united, and when people discover the need for armed struggle it is doomed.

I agree with Lenin's formulation completely that people get real education from their day-to-day struggle but of course this needs to be reinforced from without. Lenin himself said in *What is to be done?* that Social Democratic consciousness did not arise spontaneously among the workers. It had to be brought from outside.

We need to remember that in South Africa we don't have big thick forests and mountains which are advantages in the initial phase of guerilla warfare, as has been shown in Angola, Mozambique etc. The slogan "our people are our mountains" needs to be viewed seriously. If the people have been politically prepared, this creates a proper political receptive condition for armed combatants. Again, I want to stress that I am not saying we should fold our arms and stop armed actions, but our armed actions have to be in relation to selected targets for which there has been effective political preparation. To send our men into a political vacuum is a most dangerous move and likely to result in disaster.

The question of relating political struggle to military struggle is the most difficult but at the same time the most decisive. Against the background of this analysis of our situation one feels that the present ANC strategy of mass mobilisation as concretised by the three-year programme is correct and timely. It is true for us in South Africa, as it was in Vietnam, that our military line grows out of our political line.

ARMED STRUGGLE IN ZIMBABWE

From Zondo Sakala, Brighton

I am a Zimbabwean. I left my country in 1975. Before then I had what I call a very sentimental interest in everything that was happening north of the Zambezi — in independent Africa.

Between 1975 and late last year I was a student in Nigeria. In between I managed to visit other African countries: Zambia, Cameroun, Ghana and Sierra Leone. My interest in what was happening on the continent underwent a deep and qualitative transformation.

Quite expectedly I also became more critically aware of the significance of the events that have been unravelling on the "Sub-continent" ie. Southern Africa in the last ten years. A significance that can only be fully appreciated within not only a subcontinental context but of the whole African continent and indeed of the world wide anti imperialist struggle

Your publication, *The African Communist*, has undoubtedly contributed immensely to the crucial "locating" of our struggles in that part of the world and that of the rest of mankind elsewhere.

Unfortunately there is a disturbing and deliberate distortion of facts that is almost inevitably laced in your coverage of the Zimbabwean revolution. The latest example of this is to be found in Comrade T. Singh's article "From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe" which appears in the latest issue (No 82 Third Quarter 1980). Comrade Singh writes:

"In 1967 the *first* full-scale armed clashes commenced between the Rhodesian forces and those of ZAPU and the ANC of South Africa in the Wankie area . . ."

Now everyone who cares for historical accuracy would know that the correct date is in April 1966 at Sinoia by ZANLA (of ZANU). Whatever the outcome of the 1966 campaign, it still remains that it was the first full-scale armed clash between the terrorist forces of 'Rhodesia' and the African people of Zimbabwe. The fact is not erased by whatever interpretation one gives to either the event *itself* or its *perpetrators*. We owe it to posterity, in the noble tradition of Marxist honesty through dealing with what actually was/is, to keep our records correct. Continued forced interpretation of Zimbabwean history through the "authentic six" model is incorrect and disastrous.

A luta continua!

(This letter has been shortened. T. Singh replies: Zondo Sakala distorts the meaning of the passage he complains of. His letter underscores the word "first", but the point of the passage was not to assert that the battles between the ZAPU-ANC forces and those of the Rhodesian regime were the *first* battles, and the word "first" was not underscored in my article. The passage stressed that they were the first *full-scale* armed clashes. The emphasis was on the *scale and character* of those battles. This is in no way to belittle the valour of those who fell at Sinoia, or in any way to detract from their contribution to the development of the armed struggle in Zimbabwe.

About Sinoia: This is what the late comrade Josiah Tongogara, then Secretary for Defence of ZANU, was reported to have said in an interview:

" . . . when the first battle, the battle of Sinoia, was first fought in April, 1966, ZANLA had a total force of 50."¹

This is how comrade President, Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe describes the battle of Sinoia:

The Revolutionary Council was formed and in April, 1966 we launched our first battle at Sinoia when seven of our gallant fighters fought the enemy heroically until

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